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TARBELL'S

TEACHERS' GUIDE

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR 1902

MARTHA TARBELL, Ph. D.

NEW YORK · CHICAGO · TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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TARBELL'S TEACHERS' GUIDE

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR 1912

INTRODUCTION

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

The Year's Course. In our lessons this past year we took note of the evidence given by the Old Testament writers of a need unmet, a longing unsatisfied, a promise unfulfilled. In the times of the kings, the prophets and the priests of the Old Testament, the world was gradually being prepared for the coming of the Messiah: now the fulness of time has come, and the Prophet, Priest and King, to whom the Old Testament as with an index-finger points, stands before us, lives his wondrous life and speaks his wondrous words. "The evening star was setting when Malachi foretold the glory of the Son of Righteousness that should rise with healing in his wings. Now the morning star is shining, the dayspring has come."

We begin with the prophecy of the birth of Jesus' forerunner, hear the glad news of our Saviour's birth, and learn of his growth in wisdom and stature and of his increase in favor with God and man; next we study the preparatory events of his ministry, his baptism and temptation and the call of his first disciples; and then we follow him throughout his Galilean ministry, witnessing his miracles and hearing his more marvelous words, noting his popularity with the masses and the increasing hatred of the Pharisees, and watching the expanding of his program till his ministry reaches its climax in the confession by his disciples that he is the Christ and in the revelation of his divinity to the chosen three at the Mount of Transfiguration.

The Gospels, however familiar their wording, are inexhaustible and always inspiring, their theme so amazing, their significance so deep as never to be fully grasped. "Did ye *never* read?" with fine irony Jesus questions the Pharisees in one of our lessons in regard to their understanding of David's eating of the sacred shewbread; though they had minutely studied their scriptures, the principle underlying the priest's permission of this sacrilege, that the ceremonial law must be subordinated to men's necessities, they had never grasped. The truths of the Gospels have met our eyes and have fallen upon our ears hundreds of times, and still we ask ourselves, "Did *we never* read?" as a new meaning strikes us or a new application grips us. "I presume the reason that the same passages start new trains of thought on returning to them," writes that great student of the Bible, Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell, "is because it is a new man they are talking to—anyhow, wonderful as it seems, it certainly is true."

"O tender Christ, bless thou this year!
Bless thou its dawn, and bless
Its noon-tide and its evening, Lord,
And let each heart confess
As days and weeks and months go by
To help the year grow old,
That of thy glory, King of Kings,
The half not yet is told."

In the School of Christ. Captain Mahan of our navy, who has written many books that show a statesman's grasp of present events and a seer's eye for future prospects, has now published a book upon the Christian life in which he gives as his reason for turning to this theme his "enthusiasm for Jesus Christ." What more interesting and vital subject of thought can there be than the life and teaching of Jesus the Christ! Yet a teacher who has not gone deeply into the study of the Gospels, who is not responsive thereto in mind and soul, who does not appreciate the wonder and the power of Jesus, who has not an enthusiasm for Jesus the Christ, or who is afraid to show his enthusiasm, can strip even this engrossing theme of all interest for his pupils. If the salt has lost its savor for him, wherewith shall it be salted for them? If the Gospels do not convey to him an impression of surprise and gladness, whereby shall they awaken surprise and gladness in them?

If I ever feel like envying anyone, once said our poet Whittier, it is not the world-famous author, but some serene, devout soul, whose will is the divine will because he has made the life of Christ his own.

In Bishop William F. McDowell's words: Into the school of Christ, to hear what he said, to see what he did, that you may learn what he is, I would invite you: the way of life with him and like him is the sacred way of truth about him.

Your Aim. On the last anniversary of Lincoln's birthday there appeared in the *Albany Journal* a cartoon representing a picture of Lincoln hanging on a school-room wall and below it a small boy pointing to the face of this great hero and saying determinedly, "I want to be like him!" Your task this year is so truthfully to portray the Christ, this "Hero of all heroes rolled into one," as Carlyle calls him, that your pupils shall say with determination, We want to be like him!

Many of you have seen in some European art gallery an artist sitting before a great masterpiece and endeavoring to transfer to the canvas before him the work of some great genius. His copy may be a poor reproduction, but it is the best copy of which he is capable. So you are artists of character, studying the divine Original and making use of all the skill and pains within your power to reproduce his character in the hearts and lives of your pupils. To accomplish this you must interest, instruct, and impress. *Interest* comes first, for without it *instruction* will be useless; and the object of instruction is to make such an *impression* as shall lead to *expression*.

Teachers of older scholars need to gain early a clear conception of the year's work. Have you read the Synoptic Gospels from which the lessons are taken? Many times, you answer. But have you read each consecutively and carefully, so that you know their similarities and differences and the contents of each? To read Matthew and Luke through requires but two hours and a quarter each, and Mark but one hour and a half. Read each Gospel as far as the year's course takes us, first in the Revised Version and again in the Twentieth Century New Testament or in Weymouth's New Testament. As you read, make notes of how the Book differs from a modern biography, of its plan and purpose and characteristics, and then read what is said about it in the third chapter of this Introduction. Teach your pupils during the year all the information given in that chapter. It is covered by the questions given at the end of "Questions to look up, Work Assigned," throughout the Second Quarter and first part of the Third.

Your pupils are familiar with the life of Jesus, but you will probably need to clear away from their minds considerable confusion of ideas and vagueness as to events. To give them knowledge of the sequence of events in Jesus'

life, and a clear understanding of lesson facts and teachings, and their bearing upon their own every-day lives, is your opportunity. "Herod did not get our Lord in the Massacre of the Innocents because his mother hid him among the bulrushes:" you can scarcely believe that this was the actual answer made by a Sunday-school teacher, but the questioner was Ian Maclaren and we may not doubt his word. Fortunately few teachers are guilty of so startling a confusion of events, but even in teachers' minds there is sometimes a vagueness in regard to events that accounts for considerable ignorance on the part of a pupil. Teachers of younger scholars have a golden opportunty this year for giving their pupils so orderly and clear a knowledge of the events in the life of Jesus that these events will never be confused nor forgotten.

Your Preparation of Lessons. As the Archbishop of Canterbury sagely observed, No one can teach who has stopped learning. You must be both student and teacher, or you cannot be a successful teacher. You cannot successfully teach a well-known lesson without fresh preparation of that lesson; you cannot depend upon an old, worn-out memory of a lesson truth and then present that truth with its needful freshness and impetus.

Nor can you give of your best if your preparation has not been more than ample for the lesson period. What you teach gains power and force from what you know and hold in reserve. In preparing for his classes Professor George Herbert Palmer of Harvard declares that he always works hardest on the things he does not say. "I must have a broad background of knowledge which does not appear in speech," are his words. "I have to go over my entire subject and see how the things I am to say look in their various relations, tracing out connections which I shall not present to my class. One might ask what is the use of this? Why prepare more matter than can be used? Every successful teacher knows. *I cannot teach right up to the edge of my knowledge without a fear of falling off.* My pupils discover this fear, and my words are ineffective. They feel the influence of what I do not say."

Your Plan. Fullness of knowledge is essential, but equally essential is clearness of arrangement of that knowledge. It is an old story, but one of value here, that of the eminent Scotch divine who, when asked how long a time he needed to prepare a speech, replied: That depends upon how much time I am to occupy in its delivery: if I am to speak for a quarter of an hour I should like a week to prepare; if I am to speak for half an hour, three days will do; if I am to go on as long as I like I am ready now. Occasionally a teacher approaches his class as though he were to go on as long as he liked, he is without chart and compass and knows not whither he may be carried, and when the lesson period is over he has reached that goal he aimed at—nowhere. To rightly prepare for the quarter of an hour of Sunday-school teaching rather than for the going on as long as one pleases, does demand the longer time, and the time that can least be spared is that spent in making sure of one's plan of procedure in class.

The Guide furnishes information and help along all lines, for teachers of all grades. Having studied the text and having selected from *The Guide* what is adapted for your purpose, make an outline to follow in class, noting by a suggestive word or two how you will begin the lesson, what explanations you will give, what you will teach under the topic chosen, what questions you will ask, what illustrations you will use, with what thought you will close.

Words and Phrases Explained. In our Christmas lesson last year "There were shepherds abiding in the field" received in a prominent paper the explanation that "The shepherds were bivouacking in the open air," and "They came with haste" that "They ran and came panting to the place." Teachers cannot afford valuable time for reading such "explanations" of what needs no explaining, yet there are many seemingly simple Bible statements whose depth of meaning comes to one only after close pondering, and teachers can not afford to miss a careful study of the text in order to get its full and true meaning. How much of what is given in *The Guide* under this heading will be imparted to a class depends, of course, upon the pupils' age and studiousness.

It is never safe for a teacher to assume that his pupils, if young, understand what is to him most obvious. "How many apostles were there?" a teacher asked, and his pupil replied, "Twelve," and then volunteered the information

that he knew also how many Pharisees there were. "How do you know that?" the surprised teacher questioned, and the boy explained: "Why, there were 'leven; don't you remember the lesson we had about being beware of the 'leven of the Pharisees?" Make sure that your pupils use the dictionary. A word concordance and an English dictionary are the most useful helps next to the Bible, the famous medical missionary to Labrador asserts.

Suggestive Thoughts from Helpful Writers. *Veritas pateat, veritas placeat, veritas moveat*—Make the truth plain, make it pleasing, make it moving. The selections from other writers given in *The Guide* supplement the Words and Phrases Explained in making the truth plain, and they also make the truth pleasing and moving, for they are the words of deep thinkers, brilliant writers and spiritual seers.

Light from Oriental Life. The people whom we meet in the Gospels had habits of life and of thought, very different from ours. To rightly understand these records it is repeatedly necessary to gain the viewpoint, as well as to understand the customs, of the Jews of Christ's day. This information is given with each lesson, not for its own interest, which is great in itself, but for the light it throws upon the text.

The Historical Background. After a year's lessons in the Old Testament which closed with Malachi, the older classes should not take up the study of the Synoptic Gospels without some knowledge of the history between the Old and the New Testaments. It will be profitable for teachers of the Intermediate and the Senior classes to spend the first Sunday in teaching the important facts of this history, given in the next chapter of *The Guide,* and then combine the first and second lessons for the following Sunday. Emphasize especially the Greek influence and the origin of the parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees With some classes this history may well be more thoroughly taught; it is covered by the questions given at the end of "Questions to look up," under "Work Assigned" throughout the First Quarter.

Christ is a historical Person—Christianity is a historical religion, the result of certain definite events and teachings. As you can not take an utterance out of its setting without modifying the utterance itself, so you can not take a whole discourse or a whole event out of its relationship to other closely related discourses and events without modifying it. There is a book in which the sayings of Jesus have been collected and arranged topically, but in order to fully understand each saying one thinks perforce of its familiar setting in the Gospel record, for one cannot disassociate the wonderful teachings from the wonderful life without losing some of their compelling force. We are to spend twelve months in following Christ's life through the Synoptic Gospels chronologically, and older pupils should know the Historical Background of each lesson given in *The Guide.* The sustained interest that comes from a close sequence of thought Sunday by Sunday is ours this year.

The Geographical Background. The famous geographer, M. Élisée Réclus, well says that without the teaching of geography all other studies lack the vital element which is their visible, tangible and ever changing framework. In connection with the geographical information given in *The Guide* with each lesson, readers are referred to the author's *In the Master's Country: A Geographical Aid to the Study of the Life of Christ* (Price fifty cents. New York and London: Hodder & Stoughton). This book contains full-page views of places, full-page colored relief and political maps, many small maps, and outline maps to be filled in, together with all the information about the geography of Palestine essential for the study of the Gospels. The paragraphs pupils should study or the map work they should do for each lesson are indicated in *The Guide.* Two sets of references are given each week: one to paragraphs which locate the lesson; the other to paragraphs which give in the course of the year full and connected information in regard to the geography of Palestine in the time of Christ.

Suggestions to Teachers of Little Folks. A report of a lesson given last month by an educational expert to a class of children at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, contains one question and answer which afford food for thought. "Have you ever been made to go to a place to which you did not want to go?" was the question. "Yes, sir, to the doctor's," replied one little girl, and "Please, teacher, to Sunday-school," was the frank answer of an-

other. If going to Sunday-school is not a delight to your pupils, whose is the fault, the pupils' or the teacher's?

Here are two stories very suggestive for you. A little three-year-old was beaten in a fight with a playmate one day, and after that, whenever told to eat an article of food which he disliked he did it willingly. As hitherto he had always objected strenuously to it his mother wondered at the change, till one day he suddenly questioned, "If I eat a great deal of this will I get strong enough to knock Johnnie down?" Little children need an aim to work for. The other story is of the small boy who was grumbling one day over his food when his aunt said reprovingly, "I know a little boy who would be thankful for it," whereupon he at once jumped up, and asked with interest, "Where does he live, Auntie?" In little children's minds, thought and action are closely associated.

Many of our lessons this year are not adapted in their entirety for your pupils, but there is a part in each of these lessons which furnishes all the text you need for your lesson truth. The section in *The Guide* written especially for you points out this part and gives suggestions for teaching and illustrating it.

Even your pupils, young as they are, may gain this year an orderly knowledge of successive events in the life of Christ, a knowledge which will prove in later years, when their historical sense has developed, a substantial foundation upon which to rear a completer structure. This knowledge can be lodged in their memories by having them commit to memory each week the verse of the lesson which best recalls the event or the teaching. Give your pupils each week a slip of paper on which you have written the verse to be learned for the next lesson, and drill upon these verses and all the preceding verses of the Quarter every Sunday. On Review Sunday have all the verses recited and by questions recall the lesson stories.

Suggestions for Beginning and Ending the Lesson. Spurgeon had a fox dog that would lie in the sun on the porch and growl at every fly that touched him, but when he was in the chase and scented a fox all the flies in the world, his master said, could not bother him. A teacher must know in advance just how to begin the lesson period and rivet his pupils' interest in the subject in hand so that all the commotion in the world will not divert them. Always begin with something worth saying, not with something that "will do" till you get started. And not only should your beginning be worth saying in and of itself, but it should be so closely related to the lesson of the day as to lead easily and naturally to it. A skilful teacher, like a skilful musician, is known by his "attack."

Well begun is half done, but a hurried, trifling or irrelevant ending may destroy the impression of the whole lesson. Seldom will a lesson end well that has not been planned well, but even the most carefully planned lesson may be too lengthy and will not end right unless matters of lesser consequence are omitted for the sake of the fitting ending. What the ending should be depends wholly upon the way the lesson has been treated, hence it is not possible to suggest this in *The Guide*, but two ways for beginning are given with each lesson.

Lesson Topics and Illustrations. Talk about the questions of the time, exclaimed Mr. Gladstone; there is but one question—how to bring the truths of God's word into vital contact with the minds and hearts of all classes of the people. This is what the great army of Sunday-school teachers is striving to do. Sometimes the work is not effective because the teacher is trying to make too many vital contacts in each lesson hour, and sometimes it is because he has no definite vital contact whatever in mind.

Three lesson topics clearly taught by the lesson text are given in *The Guide* with each lesson, that each teacher may select the one topic best suited for his class. The connection of the topic with the lesson text is always plainly developed before it is illustrated.

Quaintly Francis Bacon observes that "Some have in readiness so many tales and stories as there is nothing they would not insinuate but they can wrap it into a tale, which seemeth to make others carry it with more pleasure." Bacon himself speaks to the average mind as does no other English philosopher, because of his own readiness to "insinuate" truth in this pleasing way.

To have in readiness stories that aptly illustrate the lesson requires more

time and thought than teachers can give, and therefore an abundance of interesting, pointed, relevant stories are given here with each lesson, suitable for pupils of all ages.

Where the lesson points directly to a missionary theme, that is given as one of the three topics. The missionary spirit, the spirit of service to others, may be inculcated by many illustrations drawn from the missionary field which have been given with other lessons, for there is no lesson without either a missionary topic or a missionary illustration. Often these illustrations are more effective in inculcating the missionary spirit than when we say to ourselves, "Go to, we will now have a purely missionary lesson," for true it is that the Kingdom cometh not with observation.

Sentence Sermons. A short saying often contains much wisdom, was the wise remark of Sophocles, a philosopher of the fifth century before Christ. Take note how Jesus loved a short, thought-arresting, memory-inspiring sentence; and he is the greatest of all teachers.

If your pupils are boys they know the Spalding Brothers, makers of baseballs and athletic goods. Tell them that Mr. Albert Spalding attributes their success (next to their mother's interest in their work) to a Sentence Sermon which he found in a newspaper and pasted over his desk. "Everything is possible to him who dares," was the legend. Whenever he and his brother became discouraged they went to the desk and read that motto aloud, and when they became very "blue" they called their mother and all three read it aloud. Thus they kept up their courage.

A variety of striking Sentence Sermons that give the kernel of the lesson, most of them from famous writers, are given in *The Guide*. Tell one to your pupils each week and have them commit it to memory. Ask frequently for these sentences in reviewing earlier lessons. See also the suggestion given under "Note-Book Work."

The Lesson's Meanings For Us. Stories of success, the magazines are full of them, nearly everybody reads them, but how many of them say as they read, "Like that man I can be persevering or prudent or of strict integrity," and then go and do it? The religion of Jesus Christ is a very practical thing, it is personal, practical righteousness that he teaches, but there is danger this year that pupils may hear his words without making them controlling influences in their lives, that they may be "passive recipients of good rather than active bestowers of good." If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, is our Master's counsel. Korean Christians do not talk much about professing Christianity; they speak rather of "doing the doctrine." Doers of the doctrine should all become who spend a year in The School of Christ.

The Lesson briefly Told. For the benefit of teachers of younger pupils the lesson is retold in *The Guide,* but lack of space makes impossible that graphic word picturing which requires the use of much detail.

Subjects for Bible Class Discussion. A knowledge of the facts of each lesson may generally be assumed in Bible classes, and time may be spent very profitably upon a systematic, historical study of the three Gospels and upon the order of events in the life of Christ, the progress of his work and the growth of opposition to him. Bible study should be combined this year with life-study, and a large part of each lesson period be given to a discussion of the present-day problems upon which Jesus' life and words throw light. The theme should be announced in advance each week that the class may come prepared to discuss it; an important part of the teacher's preparation will be the framing of questions which challenge interest, appeal to experience, and draw out opinions. "Our Bible Classes need to be trained to become forces for practical righteousness. We need to energize them with a mighty purpose for righteousness in the affairs of the world."

Work to be Assigned for the Next Lesson. He is the best teacher who, prepared himself along all lines of his subject, succeeds in getting his pupils to prepare along special lines, and does not lecture but directs and supplements class discussion. Every class, in whatever grade, should be given some definite work to prepare each week. The sense of personal responsibility is usually a spur to a pupil's activity, and therefore in older classes it is often wise to expect one pupil to be always depended upon for the historical background, another for the geographical setting, a third for the orientalisms, and so on.

In *The Guide* the definite work to be assigned is given under three headings: *Questions to look up, Questions to think about,* and *Note-Book and Memory Work.*

Many an adult has looked at the references on the side of the Bible and has wondered what they are there for. Accustom your pupils to look up the references given in their Bibles with each lesson text, and to use dictionaries and Biblical encyclopædias. The Biblical references are given in *The Guide* in connection with each question to be looked up, but do not give these references to your pupils if they are capable of finding the answers by using a Bible Concordance. Write the questions on slips of paper, and do not give too many questions to one pupil. Often it will be necessary to cut from an extra copy of *The Guide* the information you wish special pupils to be prepared upon: such clippings will save you the labor of copying.

We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest, said the Roman Jews to Paul, and this must be the teacher's desire of his pupils. You may lead a boy to a seat in a class but you can not make his presence there profitable to him unless he can be made to think while there. Arouse his interest and he will think of what you are saying; arouse it still more, and he will have something himself to say about the theme in hand, and his talking and his thinking will lead to resolution and action. The "Questions to think about" assigned a week in advance, not too many of them, will lead to most interesting and profitable class discussions.

Memory work suitable for the youngest pupils is given in the section written for them. All other pupils should this year prepare a "Life of Christ" as complete as age and ability permit. Each pupil should be provided with a blank book or with loose leaves of punched paper which when completed may be headed by a stiff cover and fitting title page and then tied together with raffia. Pupils who are accustomed to doing ornamental borders or designs in the day school will enjoy decorating the covers of these books.

Many methods of *Note Book Work* adapted to different classes may be suggested. The work should be done at home after the lesson has been taught in the class. (1) Write the title of the lesson, under it write the Golden Text, and under that paste the lesson cut from the quarterly. On another sheet, which when bound will face this one, paste a picture and write a Sentence Sermon learned. In "Suggestions to Teachers of Little Folks" the titles of penny reproductions of famous pictures are given with each lesson. (2) Pupils may write the lesson story in their own words, adding the Sentence Sermon that recalls the lesson topic taught, drawing maps at proper places, and adding pictures. (3) The lessons may be written under the topics of Time, Place, People, Events, To Remember Always (the plan given by Miss Slattery). (4) Keep three Note-Books throughout the year: the first one entitled, What Jesus Did; the second, What Jesus Said; the third, What Jesus Endured. (5) Pupils in the Intermediate Grades may write outlines rather than narratives of the lessons and intervening events. (6) Advanced pupils may make a Harmony of the Synoptic Gospels as far as the lessons extend. Each one will need two inexpensive copies of the Gospels (the Synoptic Gospels from *The Twentieth Century New Testament* may be obtained in paper cover for thirty cents), and "The Life of Christ" with its Scripture references, given in the book *In the Master's Country.* This harmony, unlike the other note-books, should be prepared the week before the lesson is taught and used in class. Cut and paste in parallel columns the texts which refer to the same event or teaching.

BETWEEN MALACHI AND MATTHEW

The Course of Lessons just completed. Our lessons this past year covered about six centuries of history, extending from the division of the Kingdom in the tenth century B. C. through the Captivity, to the return and the re-establishment in Jerusalem in the fourth century B. C. At the beginning of the year's lessons the two kingdoms together stretched from Palmyra in the wilderness on the north to the Gulf of Akaba on the Red Sea on the south: at the close Judaism was a little community round about Jerusalem, subject to the King of Persia. It was a Nation of valiant, warring, self-sufficient, narrow-minded Hebrews that we studied about in the time of the Kings; it was a Church of energetic, chastened, broad-minded Jews that we saw in our study of the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. The people had been taught in the school of adversity, they had been brought into contact with world powers and had gained the universal outlook, they had learned in the beautiful words of Micah: What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God? Through its own sufferings Israel had come to think of the Messiah as the suffering servant of the Lord.

The Contrast between Old Testament and New Testament Conditions. This year we study the Synoptic Gospels, and as we read of the fulfilment of the words of Malachi in the mission of the Baptist, we are prone to forget that between the two about four hundred years elapsed of which the Bible gives no account. Wholly different conditions now confront us, and we seem to have entered a new world. Instead of Persia being the ruling power, it is Rome; instead of prophets we hear of a Sanhedrin and scribes and rabbis and religious sects, Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes; instead of all religious life centering about the temple and its services we hear of synagogues and prayers on the corners of the streets. While the same divine purpose, the same eager passion to know God, runs through both Old and New Testaments, the religious ideas and ideals of the two are very different. To pass from Nehemiah's day to that of John the Baptist's without some knowledge of the political and religious history intervening, is like turning from the history of our early colonies to that of the Reconstruction period without any knowledge of the Revolution, Confederation, and Civil War.

Alexander the Great and the Beginning of the Greek Rule. For the two hundred years of Persian Rule after the return of the first exiles from Babylon there was comparative peace and prosperity in Judea. Then Alexander the Great suddenly appeared on the scene. At twenty he had become King of Macedon and possessor of an immense army, and had determined to make himself master of the known world. In 333 B. C., greatly to the surprise of the Jews who had known neither the weakness of Persia nor the strength of this young Macedonian conqueror, Alexander advanced victoriously down the eastern coast of the Mediterranean through Syria and Phœnicia, capturing Damascus, Sidon and Tyre. On his way to Egypt he sent to Jerusalem and demanded allegiance and the support of provisions and tribute, which was given. It is not believed that he visited Jerusalem himself, but a tradition handed down by Josephus says that he did and was met outside the walls by Jaddua, the high priest, clad in his priestly robes, heading a procession of Levites and the entire population, and that Alexander, recognizing in the dignified old man the figure who had appeared to him in a dream that assured him of victory, dismounted and knelt before him, then returned with him on foot and offered sacrifices in the temple. The First Book of Maccabees says that after his over-

An Ancient Statue of Alexander the Great

throw of the Persian Empire and his slaughter of the kings of the earth, the earth was quiet before him.

The effect of Alexander's conquest of the Jews was small politically. It meant merely that tribute hereafter was paid to him instead of to the Persian King, that Jaddua the high priest was still the head of the community, though mildly subject to the Greek governor who resided at Samaria, and that a part of the territory of the Samaritans was given to the Jews as punishment to the former for the murder of a Greek officer. But his conquest had lasting effect in the introduction of Greek civilization and influence.

Silver Coin of Alexander the Great

During his short sojourn in Egypt Alexander founded at the mouth of the Nile the city which he called after himself Alexandria. This city became famous for learning and commerce and attracted Jews in such numbers that it became the second Jewish center in the world. These Jews adopted the Greek language, and it was for them that the Old Testament was translated from the original Hebrew into the Greek version known as "The Septuagint" (70). According to Josephus the translation was ordered made by Ptolemy II (Philadelphus) who wished thus to favor the Jews. It was doubtless begun in his reign, about 250 B. C.

Alexander accomplished his purpose of conquering the world, but he failed to conquer himself, and his death in 323 B. C., when but thirty-three years of age, is attributed to intemperance.

Greek Period under the Ptolemies. When near his end Alexander said that he left his vast empire, which had not been consolidated, "To the strongest." It was gradually divided among his generals, and they were constantly at strife. In the words of First Maccabees: His servants bare rule each in his own place; they did all put on diadems after he was dead, and so did their sons after them many years; and they multiplied evils upon the earth. After the decisive Battle at Ipsus, Phrygia, in 301, Seleucus I (Nicator) held a great part of Asia Minor, and Syria, Babylonia, Mesopotamia and the rest of the East. He built Antioch in the valley of the Orontes and it remained the capital of the Seleucids for two centuries and a half. Ptolemy I (Lagi) held Egypt, and at Alexandria the Ptolemies reigned for about three hundred years.

Coin of Ptolemy Philadelphus

As Palestine lies between Syria and Egypt, it became the battle-ground for which the Ptolemies and Seleucids contended. In general we may say that from Alexander's death till 200 B. C. Palestine was under the rule of the Ptolemies, though there were several breaks when a Syrian King succeeded in wresting the country from Egypt for a few years. Especially did Palestine suffer during the wars that were waged between the Seleucids and Ptolemies from 220 to 198 B. C. Josephus compares the lot of the Jews at this time to that of a ship tossed by the waves on both sides.

Coin of Antiochus the Great

Greek Period. Antiochus the Great and Syrian Rule. In 198 B. C., Antiochus III, known as Antiochus the Great, gained Palestine and attached it to Syria, and it never again reverted to the rule of Egypt. Antiochus made many concessions to the Jews, accorded them full religious liberty, helped them rebuild their temple and pay for the temple services, and re-

lieved them of all taxation for three years that they might recover from the recent ravages of their land. He so gained their loyalty that by later Jewish historians he was held in the highest favor. It is said that Antiochus regarded the Jews as among his most useful subjects, and had two thousand families brought from Mesopotamia and Babylon to guard his interests in his rebellious provinces of Phrygia and Lydia in Asia Minor.

From 225 to 195 B. C., Simeon II was the beloved high priest "who took thought for his people," probably the famous "Simon the Just" to whom rabbinical tradition ascribes the saying that "The world rests upon three things: the Torah (Law), worship, and good works."

At the battle of Magnesia in 190 B. C., Antiochus the Great was forced by the new world-power of Rome to yield his ambition for world-supremacy. Three years later he was killed and his son, Seleucus IV (Philopator) ruled for eleven years. Of this king the story is told in II Maccabees that he tried to rob the temple at Jerusalem but was turned back in fright by an apparition which he saw in the sanctuary.

Greek Period. Rise of Two Parties among the Jews. During this period Gaza, Joppa, Ashkelon and Ashdod, the Palestinian cities on the coast, became Hellenized (the Greeks were known as *Hellenes,* whence this adjective), Samaria in the center, Scythopolis and Gadara in Galilee, and other cities beyond the Jordan—Hippos, Pella, Gerasa, Philadelphia—were colonized by Greeks, so that the Jews were brought into close contact with Greek civilization, religion, customs, art and pleasures, and in common with all the rest of the oriental world were greatly affected by this Greek influence. During this time two parties arose. The one was known as the Hasidæans, or the Pious, and was composed of those loyal Jews who were jealous for the Law and everything distinctively Jewish, their religion, customs and traditions: in New Testament times they became the Pharisees. Opposed to them was the other party, chiefly composed of the priestly aristocracy, who welcomed the Greek influence and did all they could to cultivate it: in New Testament times they became the Sadducees.

The first reference to the Gerousia, or Council of Elders, is made by Josephus in connection with his account of the concessions made by Antiochus the Great: this council became the Sanhedrin. The scribes gained recognition during this time also, as being as worthy of exemption from taxation as the priests. In Ecclesiasticus, or The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, an apochryphal book written probably early in the third century B. C., from which we may gain a vivid idea of the life of this time, the profession of the scribe is held in the highest esteem. The scribes occupy the seats of honor in the public assemblies, they are the judges and the expounders of the law, and they utter wise parables.

Greek Period. Syrian Rule under Antiochus Epiphanes. In 175 B. C., Antiochus IV usurped the throne of Syria. His flatterers called him Epiphanes, "The Illustrious," but others called him Epimanes, "The Madman," because of his passionate, capricious ways, his childish delight in pomp, his fondness for practical jokes, and his mad escapades when drunk.

Coin of Antiochus Epiphanes The Reverse shows a Figure of Jupiter holding an image of Victory The Greek Inscription reads: Of King Antiochus Theos (God), Epiphanes (Illustrious), Nicephorus (Bringer of Victory)

During a campaign in Egypt Epiphanes became suspicious of Judea and determined to completely subdue it. From II Maccabees we learn at this time of intrigues and bribery at Jerusalem among the rival aspirants for the high priesthood and the chance to farm out the taxes. One Menelaus offered Epiphanes a sum greater than he could raise, and had the temple plundered of some of its golden vessels to complete the amount, and then he caused Onias, the aged ex-priest who accused him of the theft, to be assassinated. This ruthless plunder of their sacred temple aroused the Jews and an insurrection followed. Antiochus suddenly appeared, razed the walls,

and turned the city over to his soldiers with orders to slay and plunder. Men, women and children, were hewn down in the streets or carried off to the slave markets of the coast cities. Led by Menelaus into the temple, Epiphanes robbed it of its remaining treasures, its golden altar and candlestick, and scrolls of the Law. Later even a statue of the Greek god Jupiter was placed by him in the Holy of Holies.

Antiochus' ambitions for world power met a repulse in Egypt where he was besieging Alexandria. The message came from Rome that he must leave the country. "The Roman Senate must have an answer before you leave this circle," were the words he heard as a small circle was traced around him in the sand outside the walls, and he was obliged to give up his siege. He returned to Jerusalem and vented his anger upon that already desolated city. Horrible are the accounts of his deeds as told in I and II Maccabees. He determined that no Jew should remain loyal to his faith, ordered everyone to give up the keeping of the Sabbath, to eat swine's flesh and offer it in sacrifice upon the altars to Jupiter erected throughout Judea, to bow down before other heathen idols, and to celebrate the heathen festivals or pay the penalty with his life. All copies of the Law that could be found were destroyed. Representatives were sent throughout the country to enforce these orders. By fire and sword Epiphanes converted Jerusalem into a heathen city. To his standard resorted hundreds of Jews. Thousands fled to Egypt and the surrounding country, or else sought refuge in the many caves and deserted regions in and about Judah, preferring to endure the most awful privations rather than give up their religion. "Instead of crushing Judaism, Antiochus soon discovered that his persecutions, like an electric shock, had awakened a slumbering giant. Hellenism had conquered all else, but now it was confronted by an insignificant people whose spirit no human power could break."

The Maccabæan Revolt. When the king's officers came to Modin, a little town sixteen miles northwest of Jerusalem, and ordered the people to worship the heathen idols, a priestly family refused to obey. *Mattathias* was the head of this family, and he had five sons who became famous in the struggle against Antiochus—Jochanan, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan. "Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him and fall away everyone from the religion of their fathers, and give consent to his commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers," declared Mattathias. "God forbid that we should forsake the Law and the ordinances. We will not hearken to the king's words to go from our religion, either on the right hand or on the left" (1 Macc. 2:19-22). "Whoever is zealous for the Law, and supporteth the Covenant, follow me," was his word to his people as he fled to the near-by mountains of Ephraim after slaying the royal officer. There he and his followers found shelter in the limestone caves and lived on the flesh of mountain goats and sheep and whatever roots could be found. The faithful among his countrymen, "the pious ones," rallied around him as did the Israelites of old around David when an outlaw in the cave of Adullam, and the heroic struggle of the Jews for religious liberty began. They were marvellously successful in their guerrila warfare.

Within a few months Mattathias died (166 B. C.). The struggle was continued under the leadership of his son *Judas* (166-161 B. C.) who was called Maccabee, the Hammerer. From his surname the whole family became commonly known as the Maccabees; their dynasty was also called the Asmonæan, from a somewhat mythical ancestor.

Devoted to his faith, unswerving in his zeal, adroit in planning and skilful in leadership, Judas Maccabæus was more than a match for his enemies with their far greater numbers. When King Antiochus departed for his disastrous Parthian war (in which he lost his life), he left Lysias to quell the Jewish revolt. An army of 47,000 led by three experienced generals advanced to conquer the stubborn people. So certain were they of victory that a great many slave merchants accompanied them to be on hand at the sale of Jewish captives that would follow.

Judas assembled his followers at Mizpah, famous in Old Testament history as the place where Samuel had assembled the nation for concerted prayer, and bade the timid ones depart. By wonderful bravery and cunning strategy, the Jews won in the battle that followed at Emmaus, and as they gloried in the

spoil they sang the words of the 136th Psalm, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever." A later victory at Bethzur, on the road from Hebron to Jerusalem, forced Lysias to retire and leave the Jews for a brief time in peace.

Judas at once set about cleansing the temple, for weeds were growing in the temple courts and there were heathen altars in the Sanctuary. Then the temple was re-dedicated with great joy in the month of Kislev (Dec., 165 B. C.). From that day to this the faithful Jews have kept the Feast of Chanukah, or Feast of Dedication, which Judas and the Great Council decreed should be perpetually kept in memory of the victory over the Syrian army gained by a small band of faithful Jews, and of the overthrow of Greek idolatry.

Judas next waged successful warfare with his enemies east of the Jordan, but was defeated by Lysias when he returned with a great army aided by trained elephants. Jerusalem surrendered to Lysias, but Judas and his followers remained in revolt, and conquered Nicanor, when he was sent by Demetrius I, the successor of Antiochus IV, to end the rebellion. Judas now gained the friendship of Rome, and the Senate sent Demetrius word that he must cease from fighting the Jews who were allies of Rome. Before the message arrived, however, Judas had been defeated and killed in battle. It is the deeds of this warrior, so mighty in Jewish annals, that Handel has immortalized in one of his oratories.

For eighteen years (161-143 B. C.) *Jonathan,* another son of Mattathias, was the Jewish leader. At first the Maccabean fortunes were at a low ebb, but when two rival claimants for the Syrian throne arose he received extravagant offers from both for his support. The one whose offer he accepted won, and Jonathan became "a prince of Syria, military and civil Governor of Judæa, and High Priest." Jonathan conquered cities north and south of Judæa, re-established treaties with Rome and Sparta, and cut off by a big wall the Syrian garrison that still held the citadel of Jerusalem.

The Independent Jewish State. When Jonathan was treacherously siezed and killed by a Syrian general, *Simon,* the last of the sons of Mattathias (142-135 B. C.), became the leader of the Jews. Simon was a man of extraordinary ability and under him the Jewish State reached the height of peace and prosperity. He demanded from the Syrian King (Demetrius II) a recognition of the independence of Judæa, siezed the citadel, and at a great assembly of priests and people had himself elected high priest "forever until there should arise a faithful prophet," thus making the high priest's office hereditary in his family. For the first time since Uzziah paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III in 737 B. C., except perhaps for a few years in the reign of Josiah, the Jews were politically free. Like his brothers, Simon met a violent death, but not at the hands of his political enemies; he was killed at a banquet by his son-in-law.

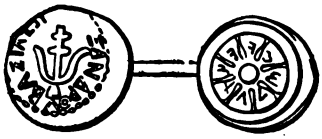
Coin Issued by Simon Maccabæus. The Hebrew on the Obverse means "In the Fourth Year—One Half" and on the Reverse "The Redemption of Zion"

Under *John Hyrcanus* (135-105 B. C.) the Jewish State reached its highest prosperity, though at first he had to contend with the last strong king of Syria, Antiochus VII, and pay him tribute for a time. His long reign is marked by conquest of territory in Samaria and on both sides of the Jordan, and by his falling out with the Pharisees, the successors of "The Pious," and the establishing of the high priesthood as a prerogative of the Sadducees.

John Hyrcanus died in peace, leaving by his will the government to his wife and the office of high priest to his oldest son. This son, *Aristobulus I,* (105-104) imprisoned his mother (where she starved to death) and three brothers, and made his brother Antigones joint-ruler with himself. Soon his jealousy was aroused against his brother, and he had him killed, and himself made king.

On the death of Aristobulus I, his widow, Alexandra, had his three brothers released from prison and married the oldest one, *Alexander Jannæus,* making him king and high priest (104-78 B. C.). Early in his reign the Jewish State might have once more come under the rule of Egypt, for he was defeated by

the Egyptian army, but Cleopatra advised that the army be withdrawn. Alexander conquered cities in Galilee and aroused the hostility of the Pharisees who were opposed to his policy of extension. For six years there was civil war between the Pharisees on the one hand and the king and Sadducees on the other, in which fifty thousand Jews perished. Alexander met his death while besieging a Greek city in Peræa.



Coin of Alexander Jannæus

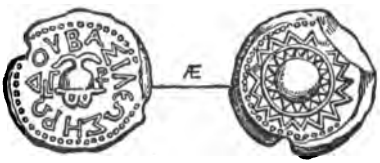
Alexander's widow, *Alexandra,* now reigned for nine years (78-69 B. C.), the only woman save Athaliah that sat on the throne of Judah. She identified herself with the Pharisees, the more powerful of the two parties, and Josephus says that "while she governed the other people, the Pharisees governed her."

Roman Rule. On the death of Alexander her two sons contended for the throne, and *Aristobulus II* (69-63 B. C.) won. Then Antipater, the ambitious governor of Idumæa (the country south of Judæa whose people were descendants of Esau), aided by Aretas, King of Arabia, organized an army and espoused the cause of the other brother, Hyrcanus II. Both brothers appealed to Scaurus, a Roman general whom Pompey had sent to take possession of Damascus and settle the affairs of Syria, and then to Pompey himself. Pompey ordered the brothers to maintain peace. Aristobulus continued the warfare and Pompey came with his army, and capturing Jerusalem after a long siege, annexed Judæa to the Roman Empire. Thus the Maccabæan State came to an end in 63 B. C. Pompey carried great numbers of Jews to Rome, who formed there the nucleus of that Jewish community of which we hear in the Acts.

Pompey

Judæa was reduced in territory, reorganized, and attached to the Roman Province of Syria. Antipater and Hyrcanus (who was high priest) supported Cæsar in his struggle against Pompey, and in return Cæsar gave especial privileges to the Jews throughout the Roman Empire. Hyrcanus was appointed ethnarch and Antipater procurator of Judæa. The walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down during Pompey's siege, were rebuilt.

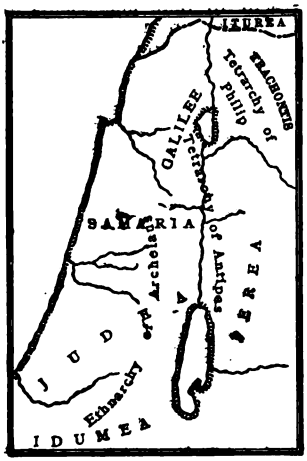
It was Antipater's son Herod, known as *Herod the Great* (37 B. C. to 4 A. D.) who ruled Judæa at the time Jesus was born, and to whom the wise-men came in search of the Christ. He was great in all save goodness, a masterful man of extraordinary ability. Wonderful is the hold that he gained over the Cæsars. "Rome was clumsily Greek at this time," says Mr. John Kelman, "and Herod was clumsily Roman. Certainly he would have been Roman if he could. He was prepared to go any length to serve his end. At the Banias Spring of the Jordan he even built a temple to Augustus." "He did more than persuade each of the masters of Palestine that he was necessary to their policy," says Dr. George Adam Smith. "His capacity for winning the friendship of the greatest Romans of his day is as striking as his power to withstand the temptress to whom more than one of them succumbed. Cæsar, Sextus Cæsar, Cassius, Antony, Augustus and Marcus Agrippa, Herod knew how to charm them all; and he baffled the intrigues as well as resisted the fascinations of Cleopatra herself. His secret is clear. He read men through and through. Thus he bribed Mark Antony, but showed himself a frank and magnanimous soldier before Augustus."



Coin of Herod the Great The Greek Words mean "King Herod"

Herod was but "half-Jew," the people were wont to declare contemptuously, because he was an Idumæan, a descendant of Esau, and they naturally detested him because of his efforts to win the Roman favor and extend the Greek influence, yet because of the general peace and prosperity that prevailed under his rule there arose a political party known as the Herodians (Mk. 3.6; 12.13) who supported his dynasty. Herod made life and property safe in Judea as never before, built several fine cities, among them Cæsarea, the only harbor the Jews ever possessed, and rebuilt Samaria as a Greek town under the name of Sebaste, erected fortresses, theaters, amphitheaters. He defended the rights of the Jews, and rebuilt their temple with great splendor.

Coin of Antony and Cleopotra



"But with all he did for Judaism," to quote again Dr. George Adam Smith, "Herod had no religious convictions. He sprang from a race notorious for their irreligion, and though he patronized the faith of Israel, the people were never really deceived by him. The hands that gave the gifts might be those of Jacob, the heart behind them was Esau's from first to last. And, therefore, just because he was without either faith or a national enthusiasm, he was obliged to maintain his position by a series of unparalleled crimes." His wife Mariamne, the granddaughter of Hyrcanus II, he murdered and also several of his own sons. He became so noted for his cruel deeds that the saying arose it were better to be Herod's swine than Herod's son. "His storms were like the storms of the sea; their wreckage strewed every coast he rose upon. One cannot estimate the individuals, the families, the circles and hosts of men who disappeared in his cruel and relentless depths."

On the death of Herod in 4 A. D. his kingdom was divided among his three sons. Archelaus became ethnarch of Judæa, Idumæa and Samaria; Herod Antipas tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa (he is called king by Matthew and Mark); and Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and Trachonitis.

Coin Celebrating the Capture of Jerusalem. The Latin Words *Devicta Judæa* mean "Conquered Judea" Victory is writing on a Shield the Letters S. P.Q. R., *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, the Senate and the Roman People. The Bowed Figure Represents Judea

In the year 6 A. D., *Archelaus* was deposed; his territory was made the Roman Province of Judæa and governed by Roman procurators. For this direct Roman rule the Jews had petitioned when Herod the Great died, but they found Roman rule very different from what they had expected. Heavy taxes were levied and the Jews soon bitterly hated Roman dominion. Judas of Gamala raised an insurrection which was soon put down, but the sect that he founded, known as that of the Zealots, persisted in their opposition to Rome and their fanaticism made them terrible opponents during the great rebellion and siege of Jerusalem which ended in its destruction, 70 A. D. The Roman procurator appointed in 26 A. D. was Pontius Pilate, who ordered Christ crucified.

Herod Antipas is the Herod whom Jesus called "that fox," Lk. 13.32. He it was who abandoned his wife, the daughter of Aretas, King of Arabia, and married Herodias, his niece and the wife of his half-brother Herod Philip (not the tetrarch, but son of Herod the Great and his second wife by the name of Mariamne), whom

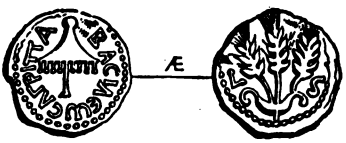
John the Baptist accused, and who had John the Baptist beheaded. When his ambition, or that of Herodias, led him to ask the Emperor Caligula for the royal title of King, the latter's suspicions were aroused and he was banished, in the year 39 A. D.

His successor was his nephew *Herod Agrippa I* (39-42), the son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great: this was the Herod who put James and many leading Christians to death (Acts 12), and whose own death was so terrible (Acts 12.23). It was before his son and successor, *Herod Agrippa II,* that Paul delivered the address mentioned in Acts 26.

Apochryphal Books which throw Light upon the Centuries between the Testaments. As every one knows, our Old Testament consists of thirty-nine books written by many authors during many centuries. The Samaritan sacred books embraced only the Pentateuch. By 200 B. C., the sacred books of the Jews included the Pentateuch, the Prophetical and the Historical Books, and by 100 A. D., the remaining Old Testament books, called the Hagiographa, had been added and officially sanctioned by the Jewish Synod of Jamnia (about 90 A. D.).

When these Hebrew books were translated into Greek for the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria (see page 19), thirteen other Jewish books were included in that Septuagint Version. When Jerome made his Latin translation, known as the Vulgate, he reluctantly incorporated these thirteen books and IV Esdras. The Vulgate was the version in common use until the Reformation. The English Reformers began to read the Hebrew original of the Old Testament, and finding that these fourteen books were not included, they grouped them together in their Bible and termed them the Apocrypha, from the Greek word ἀπόκρυφος, spurious. They continued to print them in their Bibles, however, until about 1827, for the English Church held that "the other books (the Apocrypha) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine." All but three of them are in the Bible now used by the Catholic Church, the Douay Version.

Coin of Herod Antipas



Coin of Herod Agrippa I

It is from several of those Apocryphal books that we derive the greater part of our knowledge of Jewish history in the years between the Old Testament and the New. Several of the early Church Fathers had protested against these books, and their spiritual level and general tone differ so greatly from our sacred books that they are in truth "not profitable for doctrine," yet they are useful as "example of the life" and times they portray.

The First Book of Maccabees covers the period of forty years from the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B. C. to the death of Simon in 135 B. C., and gives an account of the rule of the five sons of Mattathias. Judas Maccabæus is the hero of the book.

The Second Book of Maccabees covers the shorter period of 176 to 161 B. C. Part of it duplicates the history of the First Book, but the first seven chapters contain added information. This book is less accurate and has far less value than the first book.

Ecclesiasticus, as it is called in the Vulgate, or *The Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach* (or *Book of Sirach*) as it is known in the Greek versions, is one of the most valuable of the apocryphal books for a knowledge of the time we are considering. Consisting as it does of miscellaneous proverbs and counsels as to the conduct of life, it gives a clear picture of the religious and ethical thought of the second century B. C. It has been aptly termed "A compendium of ethical teaching, the moral guide, philosopher and friend of the average Jew in every relationship of life."

The Book of Wisdom was written perhaps about the beginning of the Christian era and is superior to Ecclesiasticus in its religious insight.

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

The Four Gospels. The New Testament begins with four records known as the Gospels. The word *gospel* is derived from two Anglo-Saxon words *God, good,* add *spell, story* or tidings: god-spell, gospel, good tidings. The good news concerning Jesus, the Son of God, is give us by four writers. Many accounts of Jesus' life and works were written, and among them all our four Gospels were declared by the Early Fathers (those in authority in the Early Christian Church) to be the true accounts. (See page 25.) That they are immeasurably superior to the ones now extant which were written later, any one can see. "The Early Church was indeed well instructed, and the hand of our God is discerned in their decision."

In the oldest manuscripts the four Gospels are bound together under the one title of "The Gospel," and each one receives its special heading "According to Matthew," etc. These special headings were not given by the original authors, but they were in use by the second half of the second century. The heading may mean that each Gospel was written by the one to whom it is ascribed, or that it is was written by some one whose chief authority was that writer or preacher; the early Church Fathers evidently considered each Gospel the work of the one to whom it was ascribed.

Matthew and John were apostles and eye-witnesses of the events they record: Mark and Luke had eye-witnesses for their authority, and, as Luke says, "traced the course of all things accurately from the first." Dean Farrar calls Matthew the preacher, because he records the great discourses of Jesus; Mark, the chronicler, because he gives a plain, straightforward tale; and Luke, the historian, because he shows the development of events.

The Synoptic Gospels. The first three Gospels as distinguished from the fourth are known as the Synoptic Gospels, literally, *the Gospels that may be viewed together.* About a century ago J. J. Griesbach first arranged them systematically in parallel columns, so that their common parts being placed side by side could be seen at a glance. This arrangement he called a synopsis, and since then these three have been fittingly called the Synoptic Gospels. The fourth Gospel has so little in common with the first three that it cannot be thus arranged with them.

As striking as are the similarities of the Synoptic Gospels is their difference from the fourth Gospel. The Synoptists narrate chiefly Jesus' ministry in Galilee; John narrates his ministry in Judea: the Synoptists record his miracles, parables and addresses given to the multitudes; John records his deeper, more abstract discourses, his conversations and prayers: in the Synoptic Gospels his teachings are given in a simple, direct, popular form; in John's Gospel they are given in a rather elaborate, philosophical, involved form. The Early Church Fathers called the Synoptic Gospels the "corporeal Gospels" as contrasted with the fourth or "spiritual Gospel." Dean Farrar expresses the difference in this striking way: The first three Evangelists give us diverse aspects of one glorious landscape; St. John pours over that landscape a flood of heavenly sunshine which seems to transform its very character, though every feature of the landscape remains the same.

The Synoptic Problem. This family resemblance which combines our first three Gospels in a single group, does not, as Dr. Frederick Godet remarks, hinder each from having its individual physiognomy, like children born of the same parents. Why do the Synoptic Gospels differ where they differ, and why are the resemblances so close where they do resemble? It is the independence and the dependence, the variety and the harmony, of these three Gospels that have long puzzled Biblical scholars.

We know that the Gospels in common with all Scripture were given by inspiration of God, through the medium of human writers. During the lifetime of Jesus and for many years afterwards his deeds and words were treasured in the hearts of his disciples who taught them orally to others—they were engraved on their hearts, to use an expression of Josephus when speaking of the

ancient Jewish laws. In those days knowledge was usually acquired, not from written records, but by oral transmission, and much practice made perfect memories. It was not till the little company of those who had personally known the Lord approached the end of life, that our Gospels were written.

It is now agreed by the great majority of scholars that the Gospel according to Mark was the earliest written, and that it (or another Gospel closely resembling it) was incorporated in the Gospels according to Matthew and according to Luke. Two-thirds of Mark is common to both Matthew and Luke, and one-third is common to either Matthew or Luke. This accounts for the similarities of the three Gospels.

Their differences are accounted for by the facts that it was not the aim of any of the writers to give a complete biography; that each had a different purpose in writing, and each selected the events which served that purpose; and that Matthew and Luke had a common source of information besides Mark;—some call this the Logia, or collection of teachings—and each had his own special source, oral or written, for each has some information given by no other.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Its Writer. Matthew (Gift of God) was a collector of taxes at Capernaum when Jesus chose him as one of his twelve disciples. His name occurs in all the lists of the twelve, though Mark and Luke give his other name of Levi. Aside from the account of his call and the reference to the feast he gave his new Master, nothing is definitely known about him. Tradition says that he preached for fifteen years in Judea and then in Ethiopia, Persia, Media and Parthia.

Because Eusebius quotes from Papias (about 140 A. D.) that "Matthew composed the logia (oracles, or discourses) in the Hebrew dialect, but each one interpreted them as he was able," many scholars believe that Matthew wrote an Aramaic (the Hebrew dialect) document which was one of the sources used by the anonymous Greek writer of the First Gospel.

When and for whom written. Matthew's Gospel was written for the Jews and it is therefore fittingly placed first; to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles is the order of divine revelation. It takes for granted that the course of events is known to its hearers and contains special Jewish phrases such as "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," "the holy city." It gives those teachings which have for the Jews a particular significance: here only do we hear of Jesus' words concerning the permanence of the Law (5.17-19); the limitation of the mission of Jesus and his apostles to the Jews (10.6; 15.24); Jesus' severest words denouncing the Pharisees (15.13; 21.28-32; and chapter 23); and his declaration of the Nation's downfall (8.11, 12; 21.43; 22.7; 27.25). It has been called the ultimatum of Jehovah to his people: Recognize Jesus as your Messiah, or accept him as your Judge! Very appropriately St. Thomas Aquinas prefixed to his Gospel of Matthew Isaiah 40.9: Upon the high mountain get thee up, thou that preachest the Gospel to Sion; lift up thy voice in strength, thou that preachest the Gospel to Jerusalem; lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah: Behold your God: behold, the Lord God will come in strength, and his arm will rule; behold, his reward is with him."

The date of the Gospel cannot be more definitely determined than that it was probably written later than Mark. See page 29. Irenæus (first century) says: Matthew among the Hebrews published a Gospel in their own dialect, when Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding the Church.

Its Aim. The Old Testament closes with the chosen nation looking for their long-promised King and Messiah. Matthew's Gospel shows that Jesus was that King, the one who fulfilled ancient prophecy—the Messiah. It is the Gospel of the Fulfilment: what Isaiah and Jeremiah and Zechariah and Daniel said about the King and his Kingdom are here noted as fulfilled in Jesus. The phrase *that it might be fulfilled* occurs many times, and there are sixty-five quotations from the Old Testament.

This is the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. It shows that Jesus' purpose was the establishment of this kingdom. As Professor Earnest D. Burton, writing in The Biblical World, says: From the assertion in its first verse that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham, to the commission

which, in its closing paragraph, this Christ, now risen from the dead, gives to his apostles to make disciples of all nations, the Book is dominated by the purpose of convincing Jewish Christians that the religion of Jesus was not merely the Judaism of the temple plus a belief in Jesus as the Messiah, but a world-religion, freed from all bands and restrictions that were local and national.

Its Contents. One-fourth of the Book consists of the words of Jesus. So much of the teaching given is concerned with the Kingdom of Heaven, that the Book may be analyzed from this viewpoint: The first two chapters announce the genealogy and birth of Jesus the Proclaimer of the Kingdom; the next two are about his preparation for his mission; chapters 5-12 give the principles that govern the subjects of the Kingdom and the way in which it was proclaimed in Galilee; in chapter 13 the progress and ultimate triumph of the Kingdom are told in a series of parables; chapters 14-17 contain current opinions about Jesus; chapters 18-20 give further information in regard to the conditions of membership in the Kingdom; chapters 21-27 are the closing scenes in the earthly life of Jesus when he is rejected by the Jews and the announcement is made of the extension of the Kingdom to include the Gentiles.

There are five great, continuous addresses in this Gospel: the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7); the address to the disciples when Jesus sent them forth on their mission (chapter 10); the seven parables that illustrate the Kingdom of Heaven (chapter 13); the discourse on the Church (chapter 18); and the discourse on the Judgment (chapters 23-25).

This Gospel alone contains the story of the visit of the Wise-men, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt and the Return to Nazareth. Here alone are found the parables of the Wise and Foolish Builders, the Tares, the Leaven, the Hidden Treasure, the Net, the Unmerciful Servant, the Laborers in the Vineyard, the Two Sons in the Vineyard, the Wicked Husbandman, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Ten Virgins.

Its Arrangement and Outline. Matthew does not give a biography of Jesus; he does not give all the facts of his life essential to a complete portrait. Nor does he present his life from the historical standpoint; he omits his Judean ministry, and gives many events out of their chronological order, grouping them by topics rather than by time. It is probable that the teachings of Jesus which are presented as one great discourse, to which we have given the name of "The Sermon on the Mount," were spoken on different occasions, as reported in Luke's Gospel. Godet compares Luke to a botanist who prefers to contemplate a flower in the very place of its birth and in the midst of its natural surroundings, while Matthew is like the gardener who for some special object puts together large and magnificent bouquets.

I. The genealogy, birth and infancy of Jesus. Chapters 1 and 2.
II. The preparation for the Public Ministry. 3: 1-4.11.
III. The Ministry in Galilee. 4.12-18.35.
IV. Journey through Perea to Jerusalem, and further conditions of membership. Chapters 19 and 20.
V. Passion Week. Chapters 21-27.
VI. The Resurrection. Chapter 28.

Its Style. This Gospel is the simple, truthful, often argumentative, record of the words and deeds of Jesus. Renan terms it "the most important book that has even been written."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Its Writer. John Mark (Acts 12.12) is called John in Acts 13.5, 13 and later Mark in Acts 15.39, and in 2 Timothy and Philemon. John was his Jewish name and Mark (Marcus) the Roman name taken later which gradually superseded the other. He was the son of a certain Mary who possessed some wealth, for she had servants and her house at Jerusalem was the meeting place of the early Christians, Acts 12.12; a cousin of Barnabas, Col. 4.10; and a convert of Peter, for Peter refers to him as "Mark my son," 1 Pet. 5.13. In the times of the early Church Fathers he is spoken of as *Kolobodactylus*, maimed in the finger, the tradition being that "he ministered in the priesthood in Israel, being according to the flesh a Levite, and after his conversion, he amputated his

finger that he might be rejected from the priesthood." It is generally believed that he was the "certain young man" who followed Jesus after his arrest in Gethsemane, Mk. 14.51, 52, because the man is nameless and Mark alone records this unimportant event.

We know that Mark went with Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey from Jerusalem to Antioch, Acts 12.25, and from there through Cyprus to Perga in Pamphylia where he left them and returned to Jerusalem, much to Paul's displeasure, for when Barnabas proposed taking Mark on another missionary journey, Paul refused to have him and a sharp contention arose, which resulted in the separation of Paul and Barnabas, Barnabas taking Mark with him to Cyprus, Acts 15.37-40. Later, Paul became reconciled to Mark, for from his prison in Rome Paul writes of Mark as his fellow-worker, Philemon 24, and refers to him in his letter to the Colossians, 4.10. Still later he bade Timothy bring Mark to him, saying that he was "useful" to him "for ministering," 2 Tim. 4.11.

There is probably truth in the tradition that Mark was Peter's assistant for a time and that he derived his knowledge of Jesus' life and deeds mainly from that apostle. Justin Martyr (100-120 A. D.) calls the Gospel of Mark "The Memoirs of Peter," and Tertullian, about a century later, says that the Gospel of Mark "may be ascribed to Peter, whose interpreter (scribe) Mark was." Noticeable in his Gospel are the inserting of details humbling to Peter which the other Evangelists omit, and the vividness of the scenes common to the Synoptists where only Peter, James and John were present.

Tradition makes Mark the founder and first bishop of the Church of Alexandria.

When and for whom written. It is believed that Mark's Gospel was the earliest written of all the Gospels, and that both Matthew and Luke used it in writing their accounts of Christ's life. It was evidently written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., because of its reference to the shewbread in the temple, and is assigned to the years 60-70 A. D., or, more narrowly, 64-68 A. D. Clement of Alexandria says that Mark wrote in Rome, while Chrysostom, two centuries later, says that he wrote in Egypt.

The Gospel was written (probably in Greek) for Gentile Christians, especially those of Rome, as shown by the careful explanations given of Jewish customs, such as the Passover observances, the custom of washing of hands, and of Aramaic words, such as *Talitha cumi, Ephphatha,* and by its numerous Latin words such as *legion, centurion, quadrantes,* and by its omission of all references to the Law and its few references to the Old Testament.

Its Aim. Unlike Matthew, Mark had no belief about Jesus to prove. His only object in writing was to tell clearly certain facts about Jesus, his deeds more especially than his words. That Jesus is the Son of God he proves, not by declaring how he came to earth, but by showing what he accomplished during his brief career here, how his coming changed the world. As Dr. William Thomson states, Mark seems to say, "Behold the Son of God! See his work, his power, his authority, and believe on him."

Its Contents. This is the shortest Gospel; yet while it is surpassed by the others in the number of events recorded, in the parallel passages common to all three it is the longest, for Mark writes with circumstantial fulness. It omits the infancy and youth of Jesus and begins at once with his baptism and public ministry. It has only one discourse, the prophecy in regard to the fall of Jerusalem, and only four parables, the Sower, the Seed Growing Secretly (peculiar to Mark), the Mustard Seed, and the Wicked Husbandmen.

In the whole Gospel there are but thirty verses peculiar to itself, among them the miracles of the healing of the deaf and dumb man and of the blind man of Bethsaida; its great value lies in its many signs of first-hand knowledge of events. In it we see the shortness and the strenuousness and the marvelous power of Jesus' ministry; his obedience and service are emphasized; and his popularity with the multitude, the growing opposition of the Pharisees, the events that foreshadowed the end, and his efforts to prepare his disciples, are clearly shown. Because so much stress is laid upon Christ's true humanity in this Gospel, Augustine assigns to Mark the symbol of a man.

Its Arrangement and Outline. Events are given in an orderly way and connected with the places and circumstances in which they occurred. Papias,

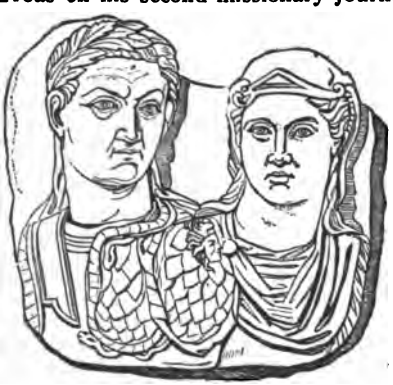
the bishop who lived about 130 A. D., explains Mark's omissions: Mark neither heard the Lord nor followed him; but subsequently attached himself to Peter, who used to frame his teaching to meet the immediate wants of his hearers, but not as making a connected narrative of our Lord's discourses. So Mark committed no error in thus writing down particulars just as he remembered them; for he took heed to one thing, to omit none of the things which he had heard and to state nothing falsely in his narrative of them.

I. The Period of Preparation. 1.1-13.
   1. The preaching of the Baptist. 1.1-8.
   2. The baptism and temptation. 1.9-13.
II. The First Period of the Galilean Ministry. 1.14-3.6.
III. The Second Period of the Galilean Ministry. 3.7-7.23.
IV. The Third Period of the Galilean Ministry. 7.24-9.50.
V. The Perean Ministry. 10.1-52; 14.3-9.
VI. Passion Week. 11.1-15.47.
VII. Resurrection, Forty Days, and Ascension. 16.1-20.

Its Style. Naturalness, straightforwardness, and vigor characterize Mark's sympathetic account of the life of Jesus as he went about doing good. Its keynote is *straightway,* which occurs forty-two times in the Revised Version: in the Authorized Version the one Greek word εὐθέως is variously translated—straightway, immediately, forthwith, anon, as soon as, shortly. Rough and awkward as the Greek often is, the many realistic touches in the narrative disclose the freshness of memory and the vividness of impression of an eye-witness of events. Mark records the emotions and looks and gestures of Jesus, and gives other graphic details not found in the other Gospels, such as the mention in the account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand of the greenness of the grass and the sitting down in companies, where he uses a Greek word that means *arranged as in flower-beds.* His local coloring gives the scenes reality, but, as others have pointed out, it is not the art of the painter but the work of the historian. We do not ask, why did Mark say that the Rich Young Ruler ran, but we ask, why did the Ruler run?

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

The Writer. Luke (Latin Lucas) was a Gentile (or a proselyte), one of the first members of the church at Antioch, Syria, and according to Eusebius and Jerome, a native of that city. He was a man of scholarship and culture, a fellow-worker of Paul, the "beloved physician" as Paul calls him in Col. 4.14. Luke was also the author of the Acts, and from his use in that Book of the pronouns "we" and "they" in his accounts of Paul's journeys, we naturally infer that part of the time he was one of the company. He joined Paul at Troas on his second missionary journey, and went with him to Philippi. Evidently he was left in charge of the church there, for he was still there when Paul visited the city seven years later. Chrysostom and Jerome took Luke to be "the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches," 2 Cor. 8.18, and in that case he was associated with Titus in the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. He accompanied Paul to Jerusalem on his last visit, and was with him while he was imprisoned at Cæsarea, journeyed with him to Rome, and probably remained with him through his imprisonment and martyrdom.



Constantine and his Wife Fausta

Tradition says that Luke died in Greece, and that his remains were brought to Constantinople by Constantine.

When and for whom Written. In his preface Luke tells us that he had a "most excellent" friend, Theophilus by name, to whom he would give knowledge

of Jesus' life and words that Theophilus might have a firm basis for the faith that was in him, and for this friend he wrote his Gospel. For this same friend he continued his writing, giving in the Book we call the Acts an account of what Jesus began both to do and to teach through his disciples; his Gospel is, therefore, "The first volume of a great narrative which traces the victorious advance of Christianity from Galilee to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Rome." So Robertson of Brighton, suggests Dr. Alexander MacColl, wrote out his sermons after they had been preached for the sake of a single friend whom he thought they might help, and that labor of love done for a friend has been used of God to mould the religious thinking of the world as have no other English sermons for a century.

It was, however, in acordance with the Greek custom to dedicate a book to a friend, or to some wealthy patron who would provide for the expense of having copies made by hand, and while Luke wrote primarily for Theophilus it is evident that he had all Greek Christians in mind.

According to Jerome Luke wrote his Gospel in Greece, and according to the title of the Syriac Version it was published and preached in Alexandria. It was written later than Mark's Gospel, since it evidently made use of that record, and earlier than the Acts, for in the preface to that Book it is referred to as the "former treatise." Most scholars give it the same date as Matthew's Gospel.

Its Source. "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order," explains Luke in his introduction to his Gospel. Naturally we infer that he had for information the versions of the Gospels already written, especially that of Mark, and also oral tradition and the memory of his talks with the apostles. Many conjecture that the birth narratives were told him by Mary. Nearly ten chapters (9.51-19.28) are peculiar to his Gospel, and for them he must have had a special source. Irenæus affirms that "Luke, the follower of Paul, set down in a book this Gospel he (Paul) used to preach," and it is easy for one to find traces of Paul's influence who looks for them.

Its Aim. The keynote of this Gospel is 19.10: For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke's special purpose was to prove to his own countrymen, the Greeks, that Jesus is the friend of wide sympathies, the Saviour, not only of the Jews, but of the whole world. The universality of his Gospel is shown by the tracing of the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam; by the prominence given to Jesus' work for the poor and the outcast; by accounts not found in the other Gospels of Jesus' first discourse at Nazareth, in which he referred to God's mercy shown to a Gentile widow and a Gentile leper; of the parable of the Good Samaritan which shows a Samaritan in better light than the Jews; of the call of Zacchæus, thought to have been a Gentile publican; of the mission of the Seventy to the Gentiles. We may well call it the Gospel of Tenderness and World-wide Love, of Joy and Thanksgiving.

As we ourselves are pagan Christians, Dr. Frederic Godet reminds us, we may call the Gospel of Luke more particularly our Gospel; it is this which explains the peculiar sympathy that Christians feel in general for this writing. If it is important for us to know Jesus as the King-Messiah promised by the prophets, as the sovereign of the divine kingdom, as the actual and future Lord of the heaven and earth, we should study, above all others, the Gospel of Matthew. If we wish to admire in him the Prophet powerful in works and words, the divine Hero whose every step is a victory, every word a ray of eternal light, in one word, the Son of God, who has traversed human life like a sublime apparition, let us especially open the Gospel of Mark. If we wish to contemplate in him the Physician sent from God to heal sick humanity, the compassionate and merciful Son of man, the Saviour of sinners and even of the greatest of sinners, let us read the Gospel of Luke.

Its Contents. The Gospel of Luke is the longest Book in the New Testament, being slightly longer than his second work, the Acts. It is two-thirds longer than Mark and one-tenth longer than Matthew.

This is the Gospel of the Infancy and Youth of Jesus. Luke is called the first Christian hymnologist, for he alone gives the five great hymns: the Ave Maria, or the Angel's Salutation to the Virgin Mary, 1.28-33; the Magnificat, or Song of Mary, 1.46-55; the Benedictus, or Song of Zacharias, 1.68-79; the Gloria in Excelsis, or Song of the Angels, 2.14; and the Nunc Dimittis, or Song of Simeon, 2.29-32.

In Luke alone are found the accounts of the forerunner's birth, the presentation in the temple, the adoration of the shepherds, and the visit of the twelve-year-old Lad to the temple.

Luke is the only Evangelist who records all of the seven greatest events in the life of Jesus: his birth, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, death, resurrection, ascension.

About half of the entire Gospel is not given by the other Evangelists. To Luke we are indebted for the parables of the Two Debtors, the Good Samaritan, the Friend at Midnight, the Rich Fool, the Barren Fig Tree, the Builder of the Tower, the King going to War, the Lost Coin, the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Unprofitable Servant, the Importunate Widow, the Pharisee and the Publican, the Pounds (which resembles the Talents); and for the miracles of the drought of fishes, raising of the widow of Nain's son, cure of the woman with a spirit of infirmity, cure of the man with the dropsy, the healing of the ten lepers, the restoration of Malchus's ear; events such as the visit to the house of Martha and Mary, the sending out of the seventy disciples, the sojourn at the home of Zacchæus, etc., and for the records of our Lord's prayers at his baptism, after the cleansing of the leper, before the call of the twelve, at the transfiguration, and on the cross for his enemies.

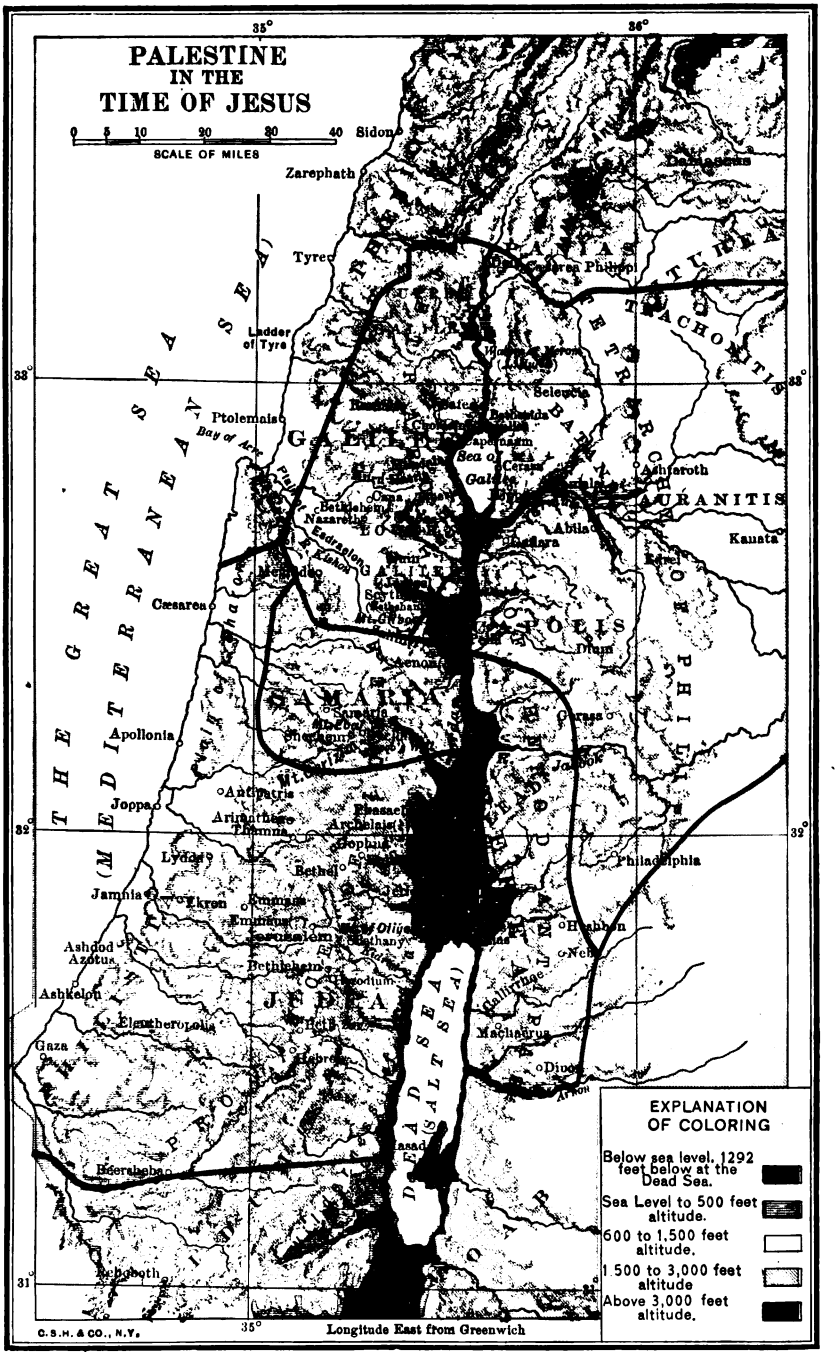
In the words of Dean Farrar: This Gospel does not deal with the yearnings of the past, or with the glories of the present, but with the aspirations of the future. It paints the gospel, not as the fulfilment of prophecy, but as the satisfaction of our moral cravings; it describes Jesus not as the Jewish Messiah, or the Universal Lord, but as the Saviour of sinners; it is a Gospel, not national but universal, not regal but human; it is the Gospel cleansed from the leprosy of castes and the blindness of limitations; it is the Gospel for sinners, for Samaritans, for the Gentiles; it is Christianity for man.

Its Arrangement and Outline. "It seemed good to me to write unto thee in order," affirms Luke in his introduction. In accordance with his plan of giving a complete and orderly picture of Jesus' life, he dates events by references to contemporary happenings, and records the circumstances in which the words of Jesus were spoken. Yet in his account of the Perean ministry, order and circumstances are somewhat vague.

I. Introduction, or Preface. 1.1-4.
II. Infancy and Youth of Jesus. 1.5-2.52.
III. Preparation for the Public Ministry. 3.1-4.13.
IV. Galilean Ministry. 4.14-9.50.
V. The later Ministry, especially in Perea. 9.51-19.28.
VI. Last visit to Jerusalem and Passion Week. 19.29-23.56.
VII. The Resurrection and Ascension. 24.

Its Style. Luke himself claims for his work fulness, order, accuracy, careful research. He is the trained historian, who gives philosophical comments upon the reasons for things; the bright, clever Greek, who writes animatedly and picturesquely. Dr. Marvin R. Vincent points out that his construction is rhythmical and his vocabulary well selected and more copious than that of other Evangelists, containing over seven hundred words which occur nowhere else in the New Testament; and less Hebraic in style than the others, except in the first two chapters, which he probably derived from Aramaic sources.

The style of this Gospel is more polished than the others, and savors of secular eloquence, declared St. Jerome. From the purely literary and humanitarian standpoint, it is the most beautiful book ever written, affirmed Renan.



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FIRST QUARTER

LESSON I—JANUARY 7

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST FORETOLD

Golden Text

Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him. Heb. 11.6

HOME DAILY READINGS. **M.** Luke 1.5-23. The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold. **T.** Num. 6.1-12. The Law for the Nazirite. **W.** Isa. 40.1-8. Voice in the Wilderness. **T.** Mal. 4.1-6. Coming in the Power of Elijah. **F.** 1 Kings 17.1-7. Elijah, the Prophet. **S.** Mal. 3.1-12. Messenger of the Covenant. **S.** Isa. 64.1-12. Cry for Help. *Selected by the International Sunday-school Lesson Committee—American Section.*

LESSON Luke 1.5-23 READ Luke 1.1-4 COMMIT vv 15, 16

5 There was in the days of Herod, king of Judæa, a certain priest named
Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of
Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before
God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.
7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both
were *now* well stricken in years.
8 Now it came to pass, while he executed the priest's office before God in the
order of his course, 9 according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was
to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole mul-
titude of the people were praying without at the hour of incense. 11 And
there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of
the altar of incense. 12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw *him,* and
fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: be-
cause thy supplication is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and
thou shalt call his name John. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and
many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the
Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with
the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children
of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before
his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to
the children, and the disobedient *to walk* in the wisdom of the just; to make
ready for the Lord a people prepared *for him.* 18 And Zacharias said unto the
angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well
stricken in years. 19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel,
that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to
bring thee these good tidings. 20 And behold, thou shalt be silent and not
able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou
believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. 21 And the
people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marvelled while he tarried in the
temple. 22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and
they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: and he continued making
signs unto them, and remained dumb. 23 And it came to pass, when the days
of his ministration were fulfiled, he departed unto his house.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-4. These verses are Luke's preface to his whole Gospel, a perfect model, as Ewald declares. He himself, Luke tells us, was a careful historian, who

obtained his information from those who were eyewitnesses of the events he records.

5-7. *In the days of Herod.* In accordance with his plan of writing "in order," v. 3, Luke begins with the prophecy of the forerunner's birth.—*Herod.* Herod the Great who reigned from 37 to 4 B. C. See page 23. *Course of Abijah.* See 1 Ch. 24.3-19: the course of Abijah was the eighth in order of the twenty-four groups of priests established by David, each of which officiated in the temple services for a week in regular rotation. April and October are thought to have been the months in which the course of Abijah officiated.—*Of the daughters of Aaron.* Like her husband, Elisabeth was of priestly descent; she was named after Aaron's wife Elisheba, Ex. 6.23.—*Righteous.* Explained as faithful in the keeping of the commandments and ordinances of the Mosaic law.—*Before God.* In the sight of God.—*Well stricken in years.* Greek, *advanced in their days,* RVm (margin of the Revised Version).

9-10. *His lot.* The duties for the week of the priests in the "course" were decided by lot.—*To burn incense.* The altar of incense stood in front of the curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, on the right hand side stood the table of shewbread, and on the left the golden candlestick. The burning of the incense was "the highest mediatorial act, the most solemn part of the day's service, symbolizing Israel's accepted prayers;" this duty came to a priest but once, for there were some twenty thousand priests at this time, and the one so privileged was ever afterwards called "rich."—*Without.* In the temple court.—*At the hour of incense.* Incense was burned morning and evening, Ex. 30.6-8.

Priest with Censer and Incense B urner

11-13. *An angel.* A messenger of God. See verse 19. The ministry of angels is prominent in Luke's Gospel.—*Troubled.* Compare Lk. 2.9; Mk. 16.5; Rev. 1.17.—*Thy supplication is heard.* Zacharias must have often prayed for a son, but his prayer in the temple at this time would be for the coming of the Messiah.—*John.* Literally, "Jehovah is gracious."

15. *He shall drink no wine nor strong drink.* He was a Nazirite, one who vowed to abstain from all intoxicants, to avoid defilement, and to wear the hair long, Num. 6.2-21. See Mt. 3.4; Mk. 1.6. The strong drink, Greek *Sikera,* was fermented liquor not made from the juice of the grape.—*Filled with the Holy Spirit.* The divine exaltation is here contrasted with the base excitement occasioned by strong drink.

17. *Before his face.* Before the face of Jehovah.—*In the spirit and power of Elijah.* Compare Mal. 4.5, 6; Mt. 17.10.—*To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.* "'The fathers' are the patriarchs and prophets of Israel, the children are their degenerate descendants who have alienated the heart of 'their fathers' by their disobedience to their godly precepts. The preaching of John will turn the heart of the children to imitate their just (pious) ancestors, and thus the heart of their ancestors, now alienated, will be turned to them in love and approbation" (*Dummelow*).—*To make ready ... him.* Compare Mal. 3.1.

18-20. *Whereby.* He would have a sign.—*Well stricken in years.* Greek, *advanced in her days,* RVm.—*Gabriel.* Two angels are named in the Scriptures: Gabriel (literally, the mighty man of God) in Dan. 8.16; 9.21, and Michael (literally, who is like God) in Dan. 10.13, 21; 12.1; Jude, verse 9; Rev. 12.7. "According to the rabbis the names of the angels represented their mission, and were changed as their mission was changed."—*Thou shalt be silent and unable to speak.* The sign asked for is given as a punishment for his unbelief, verse 18.

21-23. *While he tarried.* Or, *at his tarrying,* RVm. According to Lev. 16. 13, death would follow a violation of the prescribed forms, and a delay might indicate that this had happened. "Once when Simon the Just delayed too long, the people became so anxious that they almost broke into the Holy

Place. Afterwards, they reproached him for his want of consideration for them." (*Dummelow*).—*He could not speak unto them.* He should have blessed them, Num. 6.24.—*The days of his ministration were fulfilled.* He remained until the end of the week while his "course" was officiating in the temple.—*Unto his house.* In "the hill country," verse 39.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

6. *They were both righteous before God.* The most of the priests who appear in the Gospels are heartless formalists, if not worse; yet not only Annas and Caiaphas and their spiritual kindred ministered at the altar, but there were some in whose hearts the ancient fire burned. In times of religious declension, the few who still are true are mostly in obscure corners, and live quiet lives, like springs of fresh water rising in the midst of a salt ocean. John thus sprang from parents in whom the old system had done all that it could do. In his origin, as in himself, he represented the consummate flower of Judaism, and discharged its highest office in pointing to the coming one. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Luke.*

10. *And the whole multitude of the people were without praying at the hour of incense.* The Temple was the approach of a nation to their God. Israelites alone could enter its Inner Sanctuary, and its standard rites were performed in the name and for the sake of the whole people. At the crisis of the sacred year, the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies alone, he did so as the representative of Israel; conversely, his sins were theirs, and the additional offering which he made for himself covered them also. The *Tamid* or "Standing Sacrifice," a whole burnt-offering and meal-offering accompanied with a service of incense, offered twice a day on the high altar, was the offering of the Nation. Every Jew contributed to its maintenance. So closely was it identified with the public welfare, that in times of stress all other sacrifices were abandoned before it was, and its stoppage meant the utmost calamity to the state. Each of its celebrations was attended by a formal committee of the nation, and its national character was further expressed by the seven Psalms appointed for its weekly rotation. The Gospel of Luke opens with the service of incense accompanying the *Tamid.* And the whole multitude of the people were without praying at the hour of incense; this, though it seems an exaggerated expression, is a formally correct description of the lay congregation which attended every service of the *Tamid.*

But the nation did not make its approach to God, at least through the most intimate stages of this, in the persons of all its members. Whereas in the first Temple the laity had been admitted to the inmost court, and Solomon had ministered at the altar, in the third Temple the laity were excluded by a barrier, and Herod, though king, could not present his own offerings. Every most sacred rite was performed by priests, and the Holy of Holies was entered by the High Priest alone. This reservation of the immediate Presence of God to one hereditary order, the sons of Aaron, was connected with a change of emphasis among the various values attributed to sacrifice.

The proportion of sacrifices, which were not feasts but services wholly of atonement, gradually increased, as we may see by comparing the Deuteronomic code with the Levitical, and both with the practice of the earlier kingdom. And in consequence, the position of the priests as the necessary mediators between God and man was deeply confirmed. The consummation of every sacrifice, the offering of blood and incense, the entrance to the Presence of God, were lawful for priests alone. This requirement of a mediating priesthood and of sacrifice, Christianity took over from Judaism, as an assumed principle of religion. Condensed from *Jerusalem,* by *Dr. George Adam Smith.*

19. *That stand in the presence of God.*

One of the Seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the heavens, and down to the earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land. *Milton,* in *Paradise Lost.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

7. *They had no child.* "Wealth and sons are the ornaments of life," says the Koran. In Bagdad, it is said, a childless Jewess ties a rag about the cannon before the governor's palace, saying: "O great gun, mighty gun, I wish a child, and if you will grant my wish I will make you a present when I untie this string."

13. *Thou shalt call his name John.* It is a common custom among us for a child to be named for a father or mother who is still living. Those acquainted with the life in Palestine to-day say that the name is generally given to recall some one of the family who has passed away, in the hope that the virtue or the wisdom of that one will descend to his namesake.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Week before last we had a lesson from Malachi, the last book in the Old Testament. It began with these words: Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple. To-day we have another prophecy, this time from the book of Luke, of the coming of that messenger, who shall make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him. Between the two promises lie four hundred years of time, for it is now the year 6 B. C.

See pages 18-25 of the Introduction.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The home of Zacharias and Elisabeth was in the hill country south of Jerusalem, probably in the neighborhood of Hebron. The scene of our lesson is in the temple at Jerusalem.

In our last lessons we heard about the rebuilding of the second temple, the temple of Zerubbabel. During the Greek period that temple was further embellished, but in Herod's day it had grown shabby and looked insignificant beside his new and costly structures, his Antonia, Palace, Hippodrome, Theater and Amphitheater, built of limestone that resembled marble. Herod determined to gain favor with the Jews by building for them a new temple, but only after a long time could he gain their consent, and then only on the promise that he would not pull down the old one till he was ready to build the new, and that no profane hand should rear the Holy of Holies. A thousand priests were trained as masons and carpenters and in the year 20-19 B. C. they began to build the Sanctuary and completed it in eighteen months. Eight years were consumed in building the cloisters and outer enclosures, and not till 63-64, according to Josephus, were all the temple buildings and enclosures completed. And in 70 A. D. it was destroyed by Titus, and never rebuilt.

By means of wall map and outline maps of Palestine on blackboard or pad and in your pupils' hands, locate the city of Jerusalem, noting its distance from the Dead Sea and its elevation as shown on a relief map. See the relief map in *In the Master's Country*. If the suggestions given in *The Guide* on page 14, Introduction, is followed, assign paragraphs 135, 119, 125 and 1-4 of that book.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Is there a little baby in your home, or do you know any home where there is one? Do you love him? Does his mother love him? Can the baby do anything for her? Can he say "Thank you," for all that she does for him? Isn't he a great deal of trouble? Then why is it that his mother loves him? God has put a great love in the mother's heart for the little, helpless babe that needs her care.

Once there was a home among the hills of Judea into which no little babe had come and the hearts of Zacharias and Elisabeth, for so the owners of that home were called, were sad. Show Tissot's picture, Zacharias and Elisabeth, No. 1. See page 17 of the Introduction. Many times they had prayed for a little child, but their prayer had not been granted and now they were

old and lonely and they had given up all hope of having their great wish. Then a strange thing happened to Zacharias when he was worshipping God in the temple at Jerusalem, for he was one of the priests whose duty it was to take part in the services.

Continue the story as given on page 41. Teach the second Topic.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. After questions about the first two temples, reviewing knowledge gained in our lessons of last year, tell your pupils about the building of the third temple. See page 36. Then describe the scene in the temple which our lesson gives. Every day in the year there were services in the temple, but there were so many priests (see page 34) that they took turns in conducting the services, the company of priests in charge changing from week to week, the priests in each company drawing lots to decide what part each one should have in the services. Recall the temple building and its courts. Rows of magnificent marble columns, the four on the south being called Herod's Porch, surrounded the Court of the Gentiles, into which Jews and Gentiles alike could enter. A low balustrade warned all Gentiles that they could go no farther, on pain of death. The next Court was called the Court of Women, and here the people regularly met for public worship. Here the "whole multitude of the people" were praying at the hour of incense, while through the narrow Court of Israel, into the Court of the Priests and on into the Holy Place, Zacharias and his two attendants had passed in white robes and unsandalled feet. One of the attendants had carried a golden bowl full of incense, and the other another golden bowl full of burning coals. These they put on the altar of incense and then they went out and left Zacharias alone. In this Holy Place there were also the seven branched golden candlestick and the table of shew-bread, and behind heavy curtains and golden-covered doors was the most holy place of all, the Holy of Holies, which was entered only by the high priest and by him only once a year. As another priest in the Court of the Priests was sacrificing the evening lamb on the great altar of Burnt Offering, it was the duty of Zacharias to take the incense and sprinkle it on the burning coals, whence a thick, fragrant smoke would arise together with the prayers of the people without.

For Older Pupils. The best approach to this our first lesson in the Gospels is to connect it in thought with our lessons last year (Historical Background), and then to briefly discuss what had happened in the four hundred years between the close of the Old and the beginning of the New Testament records. See pages 18-25 of the Introduction. In adult classes this may profitably occupy the whole lesson period, and the lesson proper be combined with next week's lesson.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD

Our Golden Text. It is taken from that famous eleventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews, where is given a long list of Bible characters, men and women, saints and sinners, as various in achievements as in characters and conditions, yet all alike in this one thing, they had faith. It is a fitting Golden Text for a lesson story which teaches that lack of faith in God's promises is displeasing to him and brings upon itself punishment for a season.

In "Sermons to Young Men" Dr. Henry van Dyke comments upon this verse and says: There are a million ways of pleasing God, as many as the characters of men, as many as the hues and shades of virtue, as many as the conflicts between good and evil, as many as the calls to honest labor, as many as the opportunities of doing good and being good. That is the broad meaning of this eleventh chapter of Hebrews. There are a million ways of pleasing God, but not one without faith. Numberless forms of energy, but none without heat. Myriad colors of beauty, but none without light. All is cold and black till the sun shines. A universe of possibilities of good spreads before you, but not one of them can be realized unless you have faith. For without faith it is impossible to please God.

A Modern Eleventh Chapter of Hebrews. "The trouble is," said Harold Raymond, on his return from his second year in college, "that when you enter the sphere of religion, you deal with something quite different from anything that you meet in science. In the one you move step by step along lines of induction or deduction, and in the other you fling a highway through the air, in a bold and beautiful manner, but in a way quite different from that of science."

"I am not sure that the difference is so great as we are accustomed to suppose," replied his friend. "I have been thinking how scientific faith is, or, rather, how large a part faith plays in science. No man ever made a great discovery that was wholly an accident. I have wondered how it would seem if we were to try to add some modern names of science to the great muster-roll of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews."

"I should like to hear how it would sound."

"By faith Columbus, when he was called of God to discover a new world, went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sailed strange waters, with Cabot, Magellan, Vespucius and Balboa, the heirs with him of the same promise.

"By faith Copernicus lifted the earth from its solid base and set it to moving in rhythmic order round the sun; and all the suns and sons of suns with planets in bright array that circle round the throne of God. This he beheld by faith.

"By faith the men of science, who did not always call themselves men of faith, found substance in the things hoped for, and moved from experiment to hypothesis and from hypothesis to theory, and from theory to fact and from faith to sight; and all these were the children of faith.

"And what shall I more say? For time would fail me to tell of Stephenson and Fulton, or Morse and Roentgen and Edison and Lister; of Cyrus Field and Alexander Bell and Marconi and Wilbur Wright, who through faith made iron float, yoked chariots to the visible power of steam, caused the voice of man to be heard by his fellow man at a distance of a thousand miles, filled the air with voices inaudible to the ear, but intelligible to the mind of faith, and lifted the bodies and the minds of men on wings of wonder, and set them to sailing amid the clouds.

"And wherein we have learned from saints and apostles, and the Lord of life, and have found sure footing for faith, let us not count it unreasonable that still we follow, and live the life of faith." *Youth's Companion.*

Our Attitude towards the New Year.

Fear, facing the New Year,
Thinketh, "What shall it bring?"
And is dumb:
Dreading the hidden ways.
Faith, looking upward, saith,
"Good is in everything—
Let it come:
God ordereth the days." *Mark Guy Pearse.*

II A Parent's Joy

Sweeter than Sugar.

My little baby, little boy blue,
Is as sweet as sugar and cinnamon, too;
Isn't this precious darling of ours
Sweeter than dates and cinnamon flowers?

This little sentiment from Dr. Headland's "Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes" tells the tale that all the world is kin in its father and mother love for the little, helpless babe entrusted to their care.

The Hebrews have always regarded a childless home as a great calamity. They rejoice when a home is blessed with many boys and girls.

Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah;
As arrows in the hand of a mighty man,
So are the children of youth.
Happy is the man that hath a quiver full of them.

What would the World be without Children?

Ah! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before. *Longfellow.*

Unwelcome Babies in Heathen Lands. "To children," as Uhlhorn says in "The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," "the Gospel first gave their rights. In antiquity a father could dispose of his children at will. His power over his children was limitless; life and death were at his disposal. The law of the Twelve Tables expressly awarded to him this right. Plato and Aristotle approved of parents' abandoning weak and sickly children whom they were unable to support, or who could not be of use to the state. Whoever picked up a child who had been deserted could dispose of it and treat it as a slave. Christianity taught parents that their children were a gift from God, a pledge entrusted to them, for which they were responsible to him. It spoke not merely of the duties of children, but also of the duties of parents, and since it invested these, as representatives of God, with something of his majesty and honor, it appointed to them the lofty task of educating their baptized offspring as children of God and for his kingdom. There could no longer be any claim to an unconditional right over children after men had learned to look upon them as God's property."

Under all the non-Christian religions the girls suffer. It is this contempt for girls that has led to infanticide. "Of the prevalence of infanticide in China," says Dr. W. A. P. Martin, "there is unhappily no room for doubt. The question is set at rest by the testimony of the people themselves. Among their moral tracts dissuading from vice and crime a conspicuous place is filled by a class called "Dissuasives from Drowning Daughters." Of India it is declared by sober authorities that "The murder of female children, whether by the direct employment of homicidal means or by the more inhuman and not less certain measures of exposure to privation and neglect, has for ages been the chief characteristic crime of six-sevenths of the inhabitants of British India." In Africa the birth of twin children among almost all the races is regarded with superstitious horror. The mother is compelled to throw the twins into the wood, where they are left to die.

But whether the child is welcomed and cared for by parental love or not, the fact remains that none of the religions of the world, except Christianity, has taken any special account of the child. Condensed from an article by *Dr. Robert E. Speer.*

III Great in the Sight of the Lord

Two Kinds of Greatness. One day a fire broke out in a theater and the building and contents were wholly destroyed. As the company who were to have acted there in the evening were discussing the fire, in rushed a fun-loving young page with a charred bit of wood. "There!" he exclaimed breathlessly, "I saved that! It's the exact middle. I knew A's life wouldn't be worth living if anything deprived him of the center of the stage."

How many more people do you suppose there are who covet that sort of greatness, than there are who covet greatness in the sight of the Lord? John the Baptist did become great in the sight of the Lord, he cared nothing at all for greatness in the sight of men. When "all the world" flocked to hear him, he used every possible expression to make them see that he himself was nothing, a mere voice crying in the wilderness. How great he was in the sight of God we know from Jesus' words: But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.

"Though thy name be borne abroad,
Like the wing'd seed, from shore to shore,
What thou art before thy God,
That thou art, and nothing more!"

The only Greatness that matters. Life is a beautiful gift from the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. In "The Silver Cup," Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall has this to say about life: "Get well into your minds, first of all, the thought that life is the Father's gift, something full of beauty and meaning which he has put on you, his child, to wear in remembrance of him. I know you understand all about gifts and givers, and so it will not be strange to you to think of God our Father as a Giver, and of Life as that beautiful gift.

To think of Life this way will do you a great deal of good; for there is another way of thinking of Life which does us a great deal of harm! That is, to think of Life as something that always belonged to us and that somehow we got for ourselves, and to feel that we can do just about what we like with Life. Just as when a boy is out walking in the woods, he cuts a stick from a bush and feels that he can do anything he likes with it, for he got it for himself. He can cut it up one way or another; he can break it on a stone; he can keep it or he can throw it away. But you would feel very differently if some one who loved you brought you a beautifully carved walking stick from the Holy Land, and asked you to carry it in memory of him. You would feel that that had not always belonged to you, that it had come to you only because this person loved you, that it was in itself beautiful, and a rare treasure, and that you would like to keep it always as beautiful as when it was given you. Now you know Life did not always belong to you, and you did not get it somehow for yourself. It was given you by the Father on High, in whose eyes you are a dear child, and he has given you life because he loves you so tenderly, and has wanted to give you something beautiful."

What shall you do with this beautiful gift of life? Make it great in the sight of the Giver.

"What do you think of God?" a great teacher was once suddenly asked and gravely he replied: "What I think of God matters very little, but what God thinks of me matters a great deal." Let it be our ambition to be worthy of God's approval, to stand high in his sight. How we must live this life that has come to us as his gift in order to be pleasing to him we shall learn through our study this year of the life and words of his perfect Son in whom he was always well pleased.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Faith is believing that God will do as he says. *Mark Hopkins.*

His favor waits upon our faith. *Henry F. Cope.*

The reward of faith is quietness and confidence. *Dr. David Smith.*

A dreary place would be this earth,
Were there no little people in it;
The song of life would lose its mirth,
Were there no children to begin it. *Whittier.*

No man has a right to be called great at all if his aims are small. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Wherever you find men and women in whom the flame of desire for the coming of the Kingdom of God burns, you will find men and women who have time for children and care for them. *Dr. G. Campbell Morgan.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Another year is dawning! dear Master let it be
In working or in waiting, another year with thee.
Francis R. Havergal.

The unworthiness of our ambition to be great in the sight of men is seen when compared with the noble ambition of being great in the sight of the Lord.

He who having received a revelation of God's will for him, requires the further evidence of "direct signs," is guilty of Zacharias' error.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

When Herod was King of Judea, there was an aged, childless couple, the priest Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, also of priestly descent, who lived blameless lives, keeping all God's commandments and laws. It became this priest's turn to burn incense in the temple at Jerusalem, the privilege having fallen to him by lot, and while he was in the Holy Place, and the crowd of people." "But how shall I believe this, for I and my wife are old?" Zacharias of the altar of incense, who said to him: "Fear not, Zacharias; your prayer has been heard and you shall have a son whose name shall be John. His coming will bring joy and gladness to you, and to many others, for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, he shall not be filled with wine nor strong drink but with the Holy Spirit from the hour of his birth. Many of the children of Israel shall he cause to turn to the Lord their God; in the spirit and power of Elijah he shall serve him, turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, making ready for the Lord a prepared people. "But how shall I believe this, for I and my wife are old?" Zacharias returned. "I am Gabriel," the angel answered: "the angel who stands in God's presence; I was sent to bring you this good news. And now you shall be dumb, until my promise is fulfilled, because you have not believed my words."

Meanwhile the people without were wondering and anxious because the priest tarried so long in the temple. When he appeared and instead of the usual words of blessing made signs to them, they perceived that he had seen a vision. Zacharias remained until the ministrations of his division of priests were ended, and then returned to his home.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is Dr. Floyd Tompkins right in saying that there is a wonderful, a natural, an instinctive faith in God in this age? See the World of Faith, *Outlook*, 25 June, '10.
2. Between the Testaments.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Copy the questions suitable for your pupils on separate slips of paper, and give one or more to each pupil. Keep a memorandum for yourself, so that you may call for the answers next Sunday from the right ones. See page 17, Suggestions to Teachers.

Questions to Look up. 1. What does the name *John* mean? (See the list of Common Christian Names in the back of a large dictionary.) 2. What do we know about the childhood and youth of John? (Lk. 1.80.) 3. What was "the oath that he sware unto Abraham"? (See the marginal reference given with this verse in your Bible.) 4. Why is the song of Zacharias called the Benedictus? 5. Over what centuries did our lessons last year extend? (Clipping, p. 18.) 6. Who were the rulers at the beginning? At the end? (Clipping, p. 18.) 7. How many years between the end of the Old Testament history and the beginning of the New? (Clipping, p. 18.) 8. What was the political condition at the time of our next lesson? (Clipping, p. 18.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is the meaning of "the Lord had magnified his mercy toward her"? 2. What do Zacharias's words in verse 63 indicate as to his attitude now toward the message that had come to him in the temple? 3. Of whom is Zacharias speaking in verses 68-75? 4. What did Zacharias expect the Christ would do for his nation? How was that expectation fulfilled? 5. What is the symbolism in the phrase "horn of salvation"? (Compare Ps. 18.2; 1 S. 2.10.) 6. What is the thought of verses 68-75 of Zacharias' song? Of verses 76-77? (Clipping, page 49.) 7. Did this John become one of the disciples of Jesus?

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction to this *Guide*.

LESSON II—JANUARY 14

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Golden Text

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people. Luke 1.68

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS. **M.** Luke 1.57-80. The Birth of John the Baptist. **T.** 1 Sam. 1.12-20. Birth of Samuel. **W.** 1 Sam. 2.1-10. Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving. **T.** Jer. 1.1-10. Jeremiah's Call. **F.** Dan. 7.15-28. The Message Prepared. **S.** Rev. 3.7-13. An Open Door. **S.** Isa. 62.1-12. Office of a Minister. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 1.57-80 READ Luke 1.24-56 COMMIT vs. 67-69, or 76, 77

57 Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered; and she
brought forth a son. 58 And her neighbors and her kinsfolk heard that the
Lord had magnified his mercy towards her; and they rejoiced with her. 59 And
it came to pass on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child: and
they would have called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60 And
his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. 61 And
they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.
62 And they made signs to his father, what he would have him called. 63 And
he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they
marvelled all. 64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue
loosed, and he spake , blessing God. 65 And fear came on all that dwelt round
about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill
country of Judæa. 66 And all that heard them laid them up in their heart,
saying, What then shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.
67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied,
saying,
68 Blessed *be* the Lord, the God of Israel;
For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,
69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of his servant David
70 (As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old),
71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
72 To show mercy towards our fathers,
And to remember his holy covenant;
73 The oath which he sware unto Abraham our father,
74 To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies
Should serve him without fear,
75 In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

57-63. *Had magnified his mercy towards her.* In granting her the long-wished-for son.—*On the eighth day.* See Gen. 17.12.—*John.* The name means *the gracious gift of God.*—*None of thy kindred by this name.* See page 36.—*Made signs to his father.* As Zacharias is not said to have been deaf, Meyer suggests that the object was to call his attention without using words that might offend Elisabeth.—*A writing tablet.* A small tablet covered with wax on which the words were written with a stylus; we might call it a slate.

65-66. These verses are parenthetical; verse 67 follows naturally v. 64.—*The hill country.* See verse 39. Evidently the district south of Jerusalem where nine towns had been conferred upon the priests. Josh. 21.13-16.

68-69. Verses 68-79 are called the Benedictus. They are a song of salvation, full of deep meaning which the singer himself may not have perfectly understood.—*He hath visited and wrought redemption.* So certain is Zacharias of the coming of the Redeemer that he uses the past tense. "The vision before Zacharias is that of a victor king of Davidic race, long foretold by prophets, who will set Israel free from its foreign oppressors, whether Roman or Idumean, and in whom God himself 'visits and redeems his people'" (*Maclaren*).—*A horn of salvation.* The Messiah. The horn is a symbol of strength, or power: the might of Jesus will be used for the salvation of his people.—*In the house of David.* Implying that Mary was a descendant of David.

70-73. Verse 70 is parenthetical.—*Salvation.* In apposition with *salvation* in the phrase *horn of salvation,* verse 69: verses 71-75 further explain its meaning.—*Enemies.* The Romans.—*To show mercy towards our fathers.* "Implying that the patriarchs, though dead, still exist, and take an interest in the fortunes of their posterity, a doctrine affirmed with authority by Christ, Mt. 22.32."—*The oath.* Gen. 22.16-18.

74-75. The purpose of their being freed is that they may serve their Liberator.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

68. *The God of Israel.* The complete subordination of the personal element is very remarkable, as shown by the slight and almost parenthetical reference to John. The father is forgotten in the devout Israelite. If we remember that four hundred dreary years, for the most part of which Israel had been groaning under a foreign yoke, had passed since the last of the prophets; and that during all that time devout eyes had looked wearily for the promised Messiah, we shall be able to form some faint conception of the surprise and rapture which filled Zacharias's spirit, and leaps in his hymn at the thought that now, at last, the hour had struck, and that the Child would soon be born who was to fulfill the divine promises and satisfy fainting hopes. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Luke.*

68-75. The hopes of all Israel had for centuries been fixed upon the lineage of David. In the darkest hours of their national history his reign had been for them the golden age in the past; and, unquenchable hope re-asserting itself, it had become the type and symbol of the golden age that was still to come. There could not fail one of his seed to sit upon the throne forever. The great work of the Messiah is the redemption of Israel. He is to be a *Goel,* a Vindicator, of his nation. He is to be a second Moses, leading his people out of the foreign bondage in which under one form or another they have writhed ever since the destruction of the temple under Nebuchadnezzar. The deliverance from Egypt becomes the type of the deliverance that is to be effected in the days of the Messiah. Specifically, the power of Rome is to be broken and the kingdom of the world is to be brought into subjection to the kingdom of heaven. *Dr. Edward A. Wicher,* in *Ancient Jewish Views of the Messiah.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

57. *A son.* When a child is born in Palestine to-day, two or three local musicians are usually waiting outside to know if the new arrival is a boy or girl. If the former, they immediately beat the drum and play upon whatever instruments they have, accompanying the din with improvised rhymes complimentary to the dignity of the family, and prophetic of the career lying before the son and heir. But the moment they learn from the silence and sad looks of the visitors that a daughter has been thrust upon the family, the drum is shouldered and the musicians walk away. Music at such a time would be an affront. But in spite of this disappointment at the beginning, the little daughter's claims to family love are soon more fully recognized. *G. M. Mackie,* in *Bible Manners.*

59. *They came to circumcise the child.* At the circumcision of a child the circumciser said: "Blessed be the Lord our God, who hath sanctified us by his precepts and hath given us the law of circumcision." The father replied: "Who hath sanctified us by his precepts and hath commanded us to enter the child into the covenant of Abraham our father." *One Volume Bible Com.*

In the orthodox Moslem world, says Dr. Zwemer, no child is born but the

priest comes and whispers in his ear, "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet."

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The promise of the birth of John the Baptist is followed in the Gospel of Luke by the Annunciation to Mary. To this maiden in Nazareth who had found favor with God, the message came that she should have a son and call his name Jesus. "And he shall be great," said the messenger, "and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." And Mary gladly accepted the honor coveted by every Jewish mother. "Behold," she said, "the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." In the Gospel of Matthew we hear the annunciation to Joseph: "Mary shall have a son named Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sin." Luke next tells of Mary's visit to Elisabeth and records the Magnificat, as the psalm of Mary is called from its first Latin word, which is full of humble gratitude and joy. The announcement of the birth and naming of John the Baptist follows. The place is in the hill country south of Jerusalem, probably in the vicinity of Hebron, and the date summer of B. C. 5.

God's message to David through Nathan had been: "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever," 2 Sam. 7.16. This had been the assurance that gave hope to the Israelitish people through all their long period of subjection to foreign powers. They were now under the hated rule of the Romans, but were confidently expecting the coming of the Deliverer who should, as Zacharias expresses it, free Israel from her enemy. Zacharias's wish is enobled by the thought back of the wish, that the nation was to have political deliverance in order to become perfect servants of God. The ancient promise and the present prayer were fulfilled, as we know, not literally by the setting up of a temporal Jewish kingdom, but spiritually by the establishment of an eternal kingdom and the unending soveignty of Jesus Christ.

Assign paragraphs 135 and 5-9 of *In the Master's Country.* See page 14 of Introduction, *The Guide.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

What was it the angel promised Zacharias? By and by that little boy came to live in the home and make glad the hearts of his parents.

"How did you just come to be you?"

might have been asked of that baby, and for him our poet (George Macdonald) answers:

"God thought about me, and so I grew;"

and Zacharias and Elisabeth in their joy might have questioned,

"But how did you come to us, you dear?"

and again for the baby our poet replies:

"God thought about you, and so I am here."

God was thinking about Zacharias and Elisabeth and the little baby boy, and his parents were thinking about God. Show Reni's picture of Elisabeth, Soule 10548 (.15). When the baby was eight days old it was time for him to receive a name. Who gave you your name? Do you know what your name means?.

After a talk about your pupils' names, those whose meanings you will have learned from the supplement in Webster's Dictionary, tell the meaning of the name John—the gracious gift of God—and then give the story of the naming of John the Baptist. The hymn of Zacharias may be very simply told; Zacharias thanked God that his babe was to be the herald (explain) of the Saviour who had been long promised to his people. Teach the first topic, as shown in Amelia's Thanksgiving List, page 45.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When a baby is baptized the father and mother, you know, take it to church and tell the minister what name they want the baby to

have. There is a country in Europe (Macedonia) where they have a different custom. The father and mother do not give their baby its name, nor do they even go to the church when it is baptized. The nurse carries the baby to the church and at the door the godfather takes it and carries it forward to the waiting priest. "What is the name of the child?" the priest asks, and every one listens eagerly to the reply of the godfather. The godfather never tells anyone what name he has chosen till he tells it to the priest. Then boys run to the baby's home to tell the name to the parents, who are eagerly waiting to hear. This seems to us a strange custom. To Zacharias and Elisabeth, nineteen hundred years ago, their baby had come, the baby that was promised them as we heard last Sunday, and when the babe was eight days old he was given his name. What did the friends think he should be called? Why? What did his mother say he should be called? Why were the friends surprised at this name? Do you know anyone whose name is John? Do you know what the name John means? How did the father tell them what the baby's name should be? Why did he write the name?

For Older Pupils. Dr. Watkinson somewhere remarks that whenever a great man is born, another is born at the same time who knows that the great man is great, and whose calling it is to introduce and interpret the great man to his generation, as, for example, Ruskin did Turner. John the Baptist's great work was to inform his fellow-men of the fact that the greatest of mankind stood in their midst. At the naming of John his father looked far into the future and saw the Christ already come and his babe the herald of the Christ. What did his neighbors and kinsmen think of the name given the babe?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Rejoicing with Others

A Duty. When Elisabeth's son was born her neighbors and her kinsfolk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her; and they rejoiced with her. To rejoice with those that do rejoice is as truly one's duty as to weep with those that weep. To have sympathy, feeling for another, in his happinesses as well as in his sorrows, requires the same ability, that of putting one's self in the other's place. A playwright who was asked why everyone who knew him was his friend, replied: "I think I have a capacity for companionship; I have retained a gossip's ability to be interested in almost anybody else's affairs." The kindly interest that really cares when another is happy and takes the trouble to let that other know it, is sure to win for its possessor a host of friends.

Amelia's Thanksgiving List. Amelia McNeil seated herself by the table to write her Thanksgiving list of the blessings which naturally impel to thankfulness. Her Sunday-school teacher had urged the plan upon the members of her class, and Amelia had seized upon the suggestion. Yet as she bit the end of her stubby pencil, and gazed hard at the blank paper, her expression lacked its usual radiant brightness. As a matter of fact, it was a bad year for a Thanksgiving list. A rapping at the back door turned the current of her thoughts, and Amelia laid down her pencil and hastened to answer the summons.

Cathie Pettingill stood on the back steps, her face aglow: "What do you think, Amelia," she cried; "My letter has taken a prize." She rushed into the kitchen, flourishing a yellow envelope which bore in the corner the address of the leading daily paper of the city. Every month this journal published a page of children's letters, awarding small prizes to the three adjudged the most worthy of the honor. A printed slip within the envelope informed Cathie that she was one of the fortunate three for the month of November.

"It's the splendidest thing I ever heard of, Cathie Pettingill. To think of seeing your name in print, and 'Prize-winner' after it. Perhaps when you grow up you'll write a book." She looked at her friend so admiringly that Cathie beamed.

Amelia watched her friend flying down the walk, a comfortable glow at her heart. "Cathie will have something splendid to put into her Thanksgiving list," she told herself, and then a thought so delightful flashed into her head that she laughed aloud. What was to prevent her putting into her own Thanksgiving list the bit of news which had made her so happy? There was nothing as far

as Amelia could see, to keep her from having a Thanksgiving list as long as her arm.

The Sunday before Thanksgiving Amelia lingered after Sunday-school to inform Miss Matthews of the success of the plan she had suggested. "I did what you said, and I've got such a long one, and there's more days yet. Do you want to see it?" And Amelia produced her treasure proudly, and Miss Matthews began to read the items one by one.

"I don't understand," said Miss Matthews uncertainly. "I thought this was a list of things for which you were thankful. And these——" she floundered a little as if the words did not sound quite as she expected them to. "These all seem to concern other people."

"Does that matter?" Amelia's face was very anxious. "You see, we almost ran out of the other sort of blessings this year. Mother's been so sick, and the twins, and pa's asthma was bad, and we don't have peace, with Mr. Baily saying cross things over the back gate every other day. But I thought I could use other folks' blessings just as well. Because I'm thankful for 'em, and they make me happy, just the same as if they happened to me."

"Yes, I see," said Miss Matthews. "You are right, quite right, Amelia," and she was glad to see that this answer cleared the shadow from the uplifted face. She went on reading the Thanksgiving list, starting with the item that the uncle of the Goss children, who lived in the country, was going to send them a turkey for Thanksgiving, and winding up with the joyful news that the Walkers' cat had six kittens. And when she had finished, Miss Matthews stooped to kiss the beaming face which was of itself a reason for the thankfulness.

"It is a beautiful list, dear," said Miss Matthews, quite from her heart; "the most beautiful Thanksgiving list I have ever read." Condensed from a story by *Harriet Lummis Smith* in *The Girls' World.*

The Happiest.

If now the Master of the feast should stand,
  Seeking the happiest at life's festal board
To crown him King with garlands and to hand
  To him the joy-brimmed silver carven gourd
Of happiness to quaff—whose should it be?
  His, rich in treasures gathered from all parts
Of earth? Nay, not so: for happiest is he
  Who garners joy from joys of others' hearts. *Clifford Lanier.*

II What shall this Child be?

Christ's Faithful Soldier. Vision and sign so strange that all who heard of them wondered, heralded the coming of the son of the good priest Zacharias. The people perceived that "the hand of the Lord was with him," and they said one to another, "What shall this child be?" Surely we shall hear of him when he is grown, for he must be destined for some great mission.

The same question is often asked in regard to the work and welfare of boys to-day, and any indication of ability or interest is carefully treasured in their parents' hearts. At three years of age, Liszt would quickly leave his toys for music and at nine he gave his first concert; at six Mozart began his first tour of the great cities and courts of Europe; what the life work of these boys would be was early shown. Not so often is the question asked with the meaning put into it by those old friends and neighbors of Zacharias. When his babe was named the father looked into his unconscious face and saw in him the prophet of the Most High, the one who was to go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways. And his vision was fulfilled; the little John became the forerunner of the Christ.

At a child's baptism in some of our churches, after the minister has said, "Name the child," and the name has been given, he then says: "We receive this child unto the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign him with the sign of the Christ, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier, unto his life's end." As John the Baptist's mission was to fight against sin and to be Christ's faithful soldier, so should this be the mission of every child of God.

What is a Girl? What is a boy? a visitor asked a class, and one bright little fellow answered, A boy is the beginning of a man. That a girl is the beginning of a woman Miss Jane Addams shows in her recent book, Twenty Years at Hull House. When Miss Addams was seven years of age her family moved from a little village to a neighboring city of fifteen thousand. "I remember," she writes, "launching at my father the pertinent inquiry, why people lived in such horrid little houses so close together, and that after receiving his explanation I declared with much firmness that when I grew up I should, of course, have a large house, but it would not be built among the other large houses, but right in the midst of horrid little houses like these."

Every True Father's Vision at the Baptism of his Son. As you look at the little child, you see merely an infant, but the father of that child has a vision far different. He sees all the possibilities of the future, the joy of his own heart through the years of the boy's growing life, the perpetuating of himself in his son, the heir of his business, the inheritor of his purposes, the life that is projecting his life and the work to which he has given himself into the years that shall follow his departure. Therefore, because he has that vision, he devotes himself without restraint to the welfare of his son. His money, his time, his anxious thought—all go to the education of his child. He lavishes his affection upon him. He gives him his constant care. He accumulates for him his property. He devotes all without restraint. And the reason is manifest. He has faith in that little child. On the strength of the vision that he has of the future, his faith lays hold of the unseen, and makes it so vivid and so real to him that his whole life is governed by it. When he stands with that infant in his arms in the church for consecration in baptism, this is what is before his mind. He sees all the blessed possibilities of a human soul, the gift of God. He treasures the promises of God concerning it. He looks for divine help in doing his part for the attaining of those hopes. He recognizes the need of a strength higher than his own. He asks the Church to join with him in their prayers for that help, because he is aware that there are possibilities in the future of his son greater even than he himself can imagine, and which are measured only by the goodness of God. *Henry A. Stimson*, in *The New Things of God.*

My Mother's Hope. She sat me back in her lap. "Look in your mother's eyes, lad," she said, "and say after me this:—My mother." "My mother," I repeated, very soberly. "Looked upon my heart—" "Looked upon my heart," said I. "And found it brave—" "An' found it brave." "And sweet—" "An' sweet." "Willing for the day's work—" "Willing for the day's work." "And harboring no shameful hope." "An' harboring no shameful hope."

Again and again she had me say it, until I knew it every word by heart. "Ah," said she at last, "but you'll forget." "No, no!" I cried, "I'll not forget. 'My mother looked upon my heart,'" I rattled, "'an' found it brave an' sweet, willing for the day's work an' harboring no shameful hope.' I've not forgot! I've not forgot!"

"He'll forget," she whispered, but not to me, "like all children." But I have never forgotten—that when I was a child, my mother looked upon my heart and found it brave and sweet, willing for the day's work, and harboring no shameful hope. From *Doctor Luke of Labrador*, by *Norman Duncan.*

What shall the Boys and Girls of to-day become? A boy is a precious trust and a tremendous responsibility. What is going to become of the boys? Everybody ought to be asking that question, and trying to supply some solution of it. The boys of to-day will be the men of to-morrow, and the girls of to-day will rule to-morrow's men. Therefore let everyone now careless concerning the boys and girls wake up and go to work to solve that greatest of all questions before the American people—how to save the youth of the land for Christ and the world. *New York Observer.*

III Blessed be the Lord

A Great Opportunity. To have a little life put into your hand, to be with that little life by day and by night, to shape it, not so much by what you consciously say as by what you are unconsciously in all your influence, example, and life,—what an opportunity this is! We receive this little child as a great op-

portunity to do a part of God's work in the world. What God is doing in this world is making men and women, and when he puts a child in the cradle he says, You may help me. *Dr. Lyman Abbott, in Problems of Life.*

Where God is Known. But they's one thing that I hate to see, Doc, an' that's the way human creatures is everlastin'ly buildin' memorials o' their sorrers. I don't see why we should celebrate only when we're scourged. I've often thought that God might enjoy the novelty of havin' a steeple rise up into the sky in joy an' thanksgivin' instid o' which most of 'em is sent up with a wail. Ef houses for orphans is needed—an' it's a livin' disgrace that they are—but if they are, why not build one when God sends a little child into a home instid o' when he sees fit to take it away? *Ruth McEnery Stuart.*

Where God was not known. A missionary visited a home in Peking, China, where there was a three days' old babe, and found in the court a small table covered with paper imitations of gold and silver money, burning incense, lighted candles, bowls of stewed chicken, bamboo sprouts, rice, colored eggs and nuts. The paper money was burned and each member of the family in turn prostrated himself on a red rug placed on the ground before the table. Even the "next bigger baby," who could barely walk alone, was led out and tumbled down on his knees and forehead to "worship heaven." They explained that it was a thank-offering to heaven for the new baby. And that was the pity of it all! God had sent them the most precious gift, a little child, and they neither knew him nor the offering of love and praise acceptable to him, and could only offer paltry gifts of food and incense to the unresponsive sky above them.

A Hymn of Praise.

Father, for the joy of living
We render thee thanksgiving!
Ay, for childhood's tender kiss,
For the touch of love's caressing,
For the spirit's secret bliss,—
Lord, we lift to thee our blessing.

Ida Whipple Blenham.

SENTENCE SERMONS

I see in every child the possibilities of a perfect man. *Froebel.*

The best expression of joy, when long-cherished desires are at last on the eve of accomplishment, is thanks to God. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice;
And he that begetteth a wise child will have joy of him. Prov. 23.24.

Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others and in their pleasures takes joy even as though it were his own. *J. S. Blackie.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

To be glad when others are glad, to seek the happiness of others rather than of myself, shall be my aim throughout this year.

Upon what depends the kind of men or women that we boys and girls shall become?

What did John the Baptist owe to his parents? What do you owe to yours?

To a Child:

Like the new moon thy life appears,
The shadowy disk of future years. *Longfellow.*

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

When John the Baptist was born all the friends and neighbors rejoiced with Elisabeth, his mother, in her great joy. They came to name the babe when he was eight days old, and supposed that he should receive his father's name, Zacharias, but his mother said No, he should be called John. But there is no one in your family of this name, they remonstrated, and then by signs they questioned the father. Taking a writing-tablet Zacharias wrote, "His name is John." With these words of trust, the words of the message given him in the

temple, Zacharias's dumbness passed away and he uttered words of gratitude and praise to God. (All that dwelt in the region of the hill country of Judea treasured these sayings in their hearts, and they said in amazement to one another, for they saw God's hand in it all, What shall this child be?)

And the father Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke words of praise and prophecy. He praised God for having fulfilled his promise made to Abraham by the sending of the Redeemer who should free Israel from her enemies so that they might serve God without fear, and should establish peace, holiness and righteousness. Then he addressed his boy as destined to be a prophet of God, a prophet of repentance to Israel and the forerunner of the Redeemer. And then he closed his song with the beautiful thought of the coming of the Light of the world—

> Because of the tender mercy of our God,
> Whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us,
> To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death;
> To guide our feet into the way of peace.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Neglected children of the poor. What d'ye know about thim little wans; that ye have so carefully reared be l'avin' thim in the mornin' before they got up an' losin' yer temper with at night whin ye come home from wurruk? They don't know ye an' ye don't know thim. *Mr. Dooley.*

2. Neglected children of the rich. Mrs. Bramwell Booth is authority for the story that a wealthy lady took her four-year-old boy to a specialist because she thought there was something serious the matter with his organs of speech, but the surgeon, after a careful examination and after uttering sounds to the child that the mother could not understand, quietly told her that there was nothing the matter with the child, he spoke very well, only he spoke Finnish instead of English. Then the mother recalled the fact that the boy's nurse, who had had entire charge of him, was Finnish.

3. Schools for Defective Parents: Congresses of Mothers; Mothers' Clubs; Fathers' and Mothers' Clubs; Child Welfare Conferences and Exhibits; Home Education Congresses; International Kindergarten Associations.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Is the account of the annunciation to the shepherds found in another Gospel besides Luke's? 2. When does Luke say Jesus was born? (Lk. 2.1.) 3. When does Matthew say the time was? (Mt. 2.1.) 4. Why are they so indefinite? (Clipping, page 55.) 5. What was the probable year; and why, since we date our years from his birth, was it not Jan. 1 of the year 1? (Clipping, page 53.) 6. How long was this after the time of David? (A thousand years.) 7. What day do we celebrate as Christ's birthday and why? (Clipping, p. 53.) 8. What city is meant by "the city of David," and why was it so called? (1 Sam. 16.1, 4, 13.) 9. What famous young woman of the Old Testament lived there? (Ruth 4.11.) 10. What King of Israel had tended his flock in the same region as these shepherds? 11. What does the word *Christ* mean? (See dictionary.) 12. Locate Nazareth and Bethlehem on an outline map: from the map in your quarterly, which gives the scale of miles, find out how long was the journey from one to the other. 13. How far is Bethlehem from Jerusalem? 14. What can you learn about Cæsar Augustus? 15. How did the Persian Kingdom come to an end? (Clipping, p. 18.) See page 14.

Questions to think about. 1. In all the dates of our lessons last year what two letters were always added after the number of the year? 2. What do the letters mean? 3. After to-day two different letters will be added in the dates of this year's lessons: what are they? 4. What do they mean? 5. What does the "glory of the Lord," verse 9, recall?

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction to this *Guide.*

LESSON III—JANUARY 21

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Golden Text

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2.1-11

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS. **M.** Luke 2.1-20. The Birth of Jesus. **T.** Mic. 5.2-9. The Deliverer from Bethlehem. **W.** Isa. 9.1-7. The Prince of Peace. **T.** John 1.1-14. The Word Made Flesh. **F.** Heb. 1.1-9. God's Final Word. **S.** 2 Tim. 1.8-14. The Lifegiver. **S.** Gal. 4.1-7. Fulness of Time. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 2.1-20 READ Mt. 1.18-25 Commit vv 10, 11

8 And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and
keeping watch by night over their flock. 9 And an angel of the Lord stood by
them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore
afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring
you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: 11 for there is
born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.
12 And this *is* the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling
clothes, and lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a
multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
14 Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.
15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven,
the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see
this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16
And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying
in the manger. 17 And when they saw it, they made known concerning the say-
ing which was spoken to them about this child. 18 And all that heard it won-
dered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds. 19 But
Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shep-
herds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had
heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

8-9. *There were shepherds in the same country.* The country about Bethlehem, verse 4. They may have been guarding the sheep pastured there which were destined for sacrifice in the temple.—*Watch by night.* Or, *night-watches,* RVm.—*The angel of the Lord.* "By the word *angels* (*i. e. messengers of God*) we ordinarily understand a race of spiritual beings, of a nature exalted far above that of man, although infinitely removed from that of God, whose office it is to do his service in heaven, and by his appointment to succor and defend men on earth" (*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*).—*The glory of the Lord shone round about them.* A reminder of the Shekinah, or cloud of overwhelming brightness, which had been to the Israelites a visible sign of God's presence in the Tabernacle.

10-11. *I bring good tidings.* For these words there is but one word in the Greek (εὐαγγελίζομαι) from which our verb *evangelize* comes.—*The city of David.* The glory of Bethlehem was that it was the birthplace of the great King David.—*Christ the Lord.* Or, *anointed Lord,* RVm. The word *Christ* (χριστὸς, Christos, from χρίω, I anoint) is the Greek word, as Messiah is the Hebrew word, for the Anointed One. By the pouring of consecrated oil upon

the heads of priests and kings they were anointed or consecrated for their office. *Christ* is therefore the title of Jesus as the One consecrated to be the Redeemer of the world.

12-13. *This is the sign.* The fact that the newborn babe was found in the manger, that was the "sign."—*Wrapped in swaddling clothes.* The oriental mother wraps bands of cloth tightly around the body of her babe, confining legs and arms.—*A multitude.* Compare Dan. 7.10.—*Heavenly host.* Superhuman beings.

14. *Glory in the highest.* In Latin, *Gloria in excelsis,* as the hymn is called which dates from the second century.—*Peace among men in whom he is well pleased.* Many ancient authorities read *peace, good pleasure among men,* RVm. —*Men in whom he is well pleased.* Greek, *men of good pleasure,* RVm. The Authorized, or King James, Version reads: *Peace, good will to men,* in accordance with an ancient and also a recently discovered Syrian manuscript, where the Greek word εὐδοκία (translated *good will*) is in the nominative case. In the four oldest Greek manuscripts there is an ς added, making it in the genitive case, εὐδοκίας; this the Revisers decided to be the truer reading, and accordingly in the English Revised Version the phrase is translated *among men of good will.* To show more clearly that it is God's good will, not man's—for the phrase is "a Hebraism, meaning men to whom God is favorable"—the American Revisers changed the translation to *among men in whom he is well pleased.* The preposition *toward* in the King James Version is incorrect, for the Greek ἐν means *in* or *among.* The whole exclamation, as Meyer says, is not a wish, but far stronger—a triumphal assertion of the existing state of things. Notice the three-fold parallelism: *glory—peace; in the highest—on earth; to God—among men in whom he is well pleased.*

15-20. *Thing.* Or, *saying,* RVm.—*In the manger.* The "sign" of verse 12 fulfilled.—*Sayings.* Or, *things,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

12. *Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes.* What a picture of helplessness! But look at that Babe, manger, and clothes in the light of to-day. Stumble not at the despised acorn, rather consider the mighty oak which springs out of it, filling with spreading branches all the sky. Out of that stable has grown the civilized world. The manger was more than all thrones, the swaddling clothes more imperial than purple raiment, the Babe, the verily King of kings and Lord of lords. The humble birthplace witnessed the origin of the force which destroyed the religions of the old world, and of the movement which has created a new earth. It is not difficult now to believe in the divinity of the wonderful Child. How can we do anything else! *Dr. W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Education of the Heart.*

12. *Lying in a manger.*

If gaily clothed and proudly fed,
In dangerous wealth we dwell,
Remind us of thy manger bed
And lowly cottage cell. *Reginald Heber.*

17. *They made known concerning the sayings which were spoken to them.* "The Koreans are taught that every Christian must become a missionary to his own people, in that he must tell the story of Christ's love to those who have never heard it. When he is examined for admission to the church, he is asked whether he has done so or not. If not, he is usually continued on the waiting list until he can give evidence of his sincerity by having proclaimed the Gospel in as far as he understands it to others who know it not."

20. *The shepherds returned.* There is a homely, everyday significance in those three words. They went back singing and praising God; but they went back. It was a new world to them, but the same old duties remained to be done. They had lived through a night of splendor, but with the morning life renewed its ancient commonplace. It is always so; from our finest adventures and our loftiest visions we have to return. Life binds us all to certain common things, and we can only neglect them to pay the cost of such neglect in wretchedness. The poet is not always making poetry, the artist is not always painting pictures,

nor the dreamer dreaming dreams. The return of life's homeliest things is only tragic in momentary appearance. Actually it provides the opportunity through which our most exalted hours become fruitful of good, and are turned from possible dangers into certain benedictions. As life deepens and shades from its first dazzled surprise, most of us learn to thank God for the realm of the commonplace, and to be grateful that there is grey as well as scarlet and gold in the colors of existence. From an editorial in the *Sunday-School Chronicle.*

15. *And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them.* The time of test for the waiting shepherds was when the angels had finished their song and returned heavenwards. Then it was that in their resolve to go "even unto Bethlehem" they received the full value of God's manifestation to them. The time of test for Peter, liberated from the prison-house by the angel-messenger, was when the angel left him beyond the front gate. And for us all, the ultimate test of our Christian life is not the character and quality of our actions in moments of deep spiritual emotion, but in the succeeding hour when they have passed. For, after all, such experiences are but transitory and preparatory. We cannot live on "thrills," nor is it ever good for us to seek them, save as their memory may be an inspiration to holy living and faithful serving, in the ordinary details and duties which go to make up daily life for every one.

God does not reveal himself to men in a continuous ministry of miracle. He does not do for men what they can do for themselves, otherwise his grace would be inimical to man's truest development, and would rob him of the opportunity of acquiring moral strength and fibre. This is why our angel-ministers are but visitors, whether they be clad in the sombre garments of sorrow or the white raiment of joy. When they have gone we must turn the message they have brought into obedience, and translate their ministry to us into service for others. We may light our torches at the heavenly flame they bear, but we must carry the light with our own hands to illumine the daily round and common task. For ordinary life is our common opportunity of glorifying God in "whatsoever we do, whether in word or deed." *J. Stuart Holden,* in *Redeeming Vision.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1-3. *There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled...And all went to enroll themselves, every one to his own city.* Recently it was discovered that under the Roman Empire in Egypt a census was taken every fourteen years. The Roman organization of Egypt was arranged by Augustus, and this cycle is reckoned from the year 23 B. C., when his power as emperor was fixed in the form which determined the imperial system for several centuries. The cycle years were 9 B. C., A. D. 6, 20 etc., and the census was taken in the year following the cycle year. Now the oldest authority who mentions a date for the Saviour's birth is Tertullian, who lived from A. D. 160 to 240, and he places it when Sentius Saturninus was governor of Syria. Sentius is known from other sources to have governed Syria from 9 to 7 B. C. At that time Palestine was a dependent kingdom, ruled by Herod, but superintended in a certain degree by the governor of Syria. This is a remarkable coincidence. Here we have a census system instituted by Augustus in Egypt, a census in Palestine coinciding with it, and a statement by Luke that Augustus ordered a census of the whole Empire. Can it be that the census which was periodically taken in Egypt was taken also in other parts of the Roman world? Its existence in Egypt was discovered only a few years ago by means of torn census papers, picked up in Egyptian rubbish heaps and laboriously deciphered by scholars. Egypt is the only country where the climate is dry enough to preserve paper. In other countries paper moulders into dust, through the influence of moisture; and we have no chance of finding the original census papers. But it is known that a census was taken in Rome in 8 B. C. and A. D. 48, in Palestine in A. D. 7, and in Asia Minor in A. D.

Coin of Augustus

35. These are alluded to by ancient writers; and the chance mention in those cases tells in favor of a general imperial census system similar to the Egyptian fourteen-year-cycle.

Further, Luke records that for the purposes of the census all people went each to his own city. This was formerly a serious difficulty, as it certainly seemed an unusual and unexpected feature of a census. But in 1906 excavation in the waster-paper heaps of Egypt again solved the difficulty. An order was discovered issued by the governor in A. D. 104, a cycle year, ordering that every Egyptian must return to his own home in preparation for the numbering of the households. This discovery converts what formerly seemed an unusual feature peculiar to the Jewish census into a regular institution of the Roman census generally. Thus the apparent difficulty has been transformed into a confirmation of the opinion that the census in Palestine was made in the same way and at the same time as the Egyptian census in accordance with a decree of the Emperor Augustus. We conclude that the birth of Jesus occurred in the year 8 B. C. *Sir William M. Ramsey,* in *The Sunday-School Times.*

2. *When Quirinius was governor of Syria.* At the time of the birth of Jesus Saturninus (9-6 B. C.) or Varus (6-4 B. C.) was the civil ruler of Syria; Quirinius was probably the military ruler, for an inscription states that he subdued the Homonadenses in Syria before he was civil governor (when a later taxation took place in 7 A. D. to which Luke refers in Acts 5.37 as "the days of the taxing)." In times of trouble there were often two heads of a province, the civil and the military.

7. *There was no room for them in the inn.* Most inns were only a high enclosure with rooms built about a central court. In the court there was a fountain where water could be obtained, but each traveler had to bring with him food and bedding.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The exact date of the birth of Jesus is not known. Before the sixth century A. D. time was reckoned by the name of a magistrate, by the year of a king, "in the year of the world." (*Anno Mundi* or *A. M.*) or from the founding of Rome (*Urbe Condita* or *U. C.*). In that century it was decided to change the system of chronology, and to date the years from Christ's birth "in the year of our Lord" (*Anno Domini, A. D.*). The task of computing the time of his birth was given to a learned monk named Dionysius Exiguus, and it has since been found that he had made a mistake in his computation and placed the date several years too late. Herod, we know, died in April 750 U. C. or by our reckoning 4 B. C. We know that some months must have intervened between the birth of Jesus and the slaughter of the babes at Bethlehem by Herod and the latter's death, Joseph having meanwhile taken Mary and the young Child into Egypt. Hence the latest possible date for his birth is the year 5 B. C., the date accepted by most scholars. Dr. Ramsay places it three years earlier and makes the stay in Egypt a longer one than is usually supposed, as it was until Herod's death in 4 B. C.

At first Christmas was celebrated on various days. In the fourth century the Eastern and the Western Churches of Europe agreed to celebrate December 25th as the day of Christ's birth. Dec. 25, B. C. 5 is four years—and one week—before the year which is called A. D. 1. In Jan. A. D. 2, then, Jesus was five years old; in Jan. A. D. 3, six years old: thus we must always add three years to the date of any event in his life in order to determine his age at that time.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

It is eighty miles from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, and the journey must have taken Mary and Joseph several days. They went across Galilee to the Jordan and then down the Jordan Valley on the east side till they came almost to the upper end of the Dead Sea, where they turned westward across the Jordan and went up the steep road to Jerusalem and Bethlehem. As they neared Bethlehem they must have seen the tower called Midgal Eder, or Watch-Tower of the Flock, where shepherds watched the flocks that were intended for sacrific in the temple. Their way led over the fields and up the steep, carefully terraced slope of the long narrow ridge on which Bethlehem is located,

five miles southwest of Jerusalem. When they came to the little town they found only one long street lined with flat-roofed, one-story houses built of clay. These houses did not have windows facing the street; each had a door or gateway leading into a central yard around which the house was built and toward which its rooms faced. Under the same roof was often a room with rude stalls where cows and oxen were kept.

In the limestone rock of Bethlehem are many caves and these were sometimes used as stables. To-day there is a church in Bethlehem called the Church of the Nativity because it is built over the traditional site of the manger in which the Infant Jesus was laid. It is the most prominent building there, and is surrounded by fortress-like convent buildings.

Assign paragraphs 162, 163, 133, 134 and 10-13 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

"Whose birthday will it be to-morrow?" a teacher once asked her little pupils, referring to the coming Christmas Day. "It's Mary's birthday," one little tot answered. "Mary's birthday?" the surprised teacher questioned. "Why, yes, don't you know? Mary (merry) Christmas!"

Possibly some of your pupils know as little what Christmas Day means. The Christmas season is fresh in their minds: by questions discover their thoughts about Christmas Day and then tell them the story of the birth of the Christ. This beginning of the story as told by the Rev. Canon Pascal Harrower, in the Sunday School Commission Bulletin, will show you how to tell it in a beautifully simple way:

Many years ago, in the land of Palestine, a man and a woman came out of the north country, travelling slowly, over the hills and through beautiful valleys from Nazareth to Bethlehem. (Show the places on a map.) It was the winter season. At night they rested, and by day they journeyed in the bright sunlight, stopping often because the wife grew weary with the way. He was a carpenter of Nazareth, strong and gentle, and very thoughtful as he walked beside her. She was much younger than he, with wonderful great eyes, dark and soft; the golden brown hair grew low upon the brows: her voice was full of rich, sweet music, and her face often lighted up as if she were thinking things that filled her heart with hope and joy. She was expecting soon the birth of her little Babe, and was on her way to the city where her forefathers had lived for hundreds of years. Both she and Joseph had descended from the family of David the Great King, and it was her hope that her Child should be born there in the city of his fathers.

The travellers had passed by Jerusalem late that afternoon, and now as night came on, reached Bethlehem village, among the hills of Judah. (Show Tissot's picture No. 2.) But they were too late to find shelter in the crowded inn, and their only refuge was a stable, built in a large cave near by. There in that dim place, in the deep shadows, lighted only by the flickering, uncertain gleam of a rude stable lantern swinging from the low rafters above, with the cattle standing near, Jesus was born that night. He lay in Mary's arms, the Child for whom she had been waiting, and whose birth the Angel Gabriel had foretold long ago in Nazareth.

Now give the other scene that night in the fields beyond Bethlehem. These words by Dean Hodges, in "When the King came," will show you how to make this vivid. We seldom see shepherds in this country. The men with sticks who drive sheep through the streets are not true shepherds. Shepherds never drive sheep. They go before and call them and the sheep know the shepherd's voice and follow him. While the flocks are in the fields, the shepherds stay among them to keep them from straying off and getting lost, and to protect them from wolves and bears in places where such wild animals are found.

There are countries where the grass is green all the year round, and where almost the only snow which the people see is on the tops of the mountains. In such countries the sheep can feed in the fields even in the winter.

So it was in the winter night, and the stars were shining and all was still, and in the fields the flocks were sleeping while the shepherds watched. We may guess that, and they watched. They talked together and told one another stories, especially about David, who, when he was a boy, had lived at Bethlehem and

had lain many a frosty night in that very pasture with his sheep, and once had killed a lion and a bear. The lion and the bear had come to get the sheep, and young David and fought with them and killed them; and they sang the Shepherd's Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd;" and they spoke of the King of Glory, how he would sometime come, according to the promise; and they wondered how he would look, and what he would do when he came. And they said, "When he comes he will be seen here in Bethlehem." For that was written in the Bible.

Then, as they watched and talked and sang, suddenly something happened.

As you finish the story show a copy of Plockhorst's Apparition to the Shepherds (Brown, No. 822) and of Le Rolle's The Nativity (Union Press, No. 6), which cost a cent each. You may prefer to give one to each of your scholars. Then tell them the story about "Receiving the Christ Child," Second Topic.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In the home of Dr. A. C. Dixon it was the first Christmas morning after the death of his nine-year-old boy and all were sad and silent as they sat down to their breakfast. A little daughter looked up through her tears and broke the silence by saying, "This is Howard's first Christmas in heaven." Then another little child questioned, "Is it not Christmas every day in heaven?" What the little child thought about heaven is just as true about earth. We may keep Christmas every day on earth. In the beautiful words of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps:

> The life that knoweth him shall hide apart,
> And keep eternal Christmas in the heart.

We celebrated Christmas a month ago; to-day let us learn that the coming of the wonderful Babe may gladden all our days and give us at all times the true Christmas spirit which was voiced by the angels' song of peace and good-will.

For Older Pupils. We have several national holidays: which one only is kept all over the world? Each nation celebrates the birthdays of its own heroes and benefactors, but all nations and all ages celebrate the birthday of the great Benefactor of humanity, Jesus the Christ. When does Luke say that he was born? It came to pass in those days, when there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. What does Matthew say was the date of that birthday? Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the King. Herod reigned thirty-seven years, but this was definite enough for Matthew. Mark and John make no reference to the time. Nothing is said by any Gospel writer about the year or the season of Christ's birth. As you well know, chronology throughout the Scriptures is indefinite and the reason is that the writers were orientals, and orientals have always thought of time by periods instead of by exact number of days or years as occidentals do. When was our Saviour born? See the Historical Background.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Message

Unto you. He does not simply say, Christ is born, but *to you* he is born; neither does he say, I bring glad tidings, but *to you* I bring glad tidings of great joy. Furthermore, this joy was not to remain in them, but it was to be *to all* people. *Martin Luther.*

Unto you is Born. One dark night a young German soldier, posted at a sentry-box before the barracks, heard the hoof-beats of his Captain's horse. He went quickly out and offered his salute and then stood there like a marble statue till the Captain called out: "What use to me are your tokens of respect this dark night; open the gate, so that I can ride in." Is there not a lesson here for us? Of what use to our Master are all the honors we pay him at this season if we do not give him entrance into our hearts? Long ago a poet expressed this thought—

> Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
> If he's not born in thee, thy soul is all forlorn.

Unto you is Born this Day. The observance of Christmas has no lasting value to us if we do not carry its spirit with us throughout the days of the year. "It is only for thirty-six hours of the three hundred and sixty-five days that all people remember they are brothers and sisters, and those are the hours that we call Christmas Eve and Christmas Day," says Dr. Hale: "When they always remember it, it will be Christmas all the time."

A rich man once sent his servant to Melancthon to inquire why it was that in the Christmas song he heard the children sing "A little child so winsome is born to you *to-day.*" "Ask your Master," returned Melancthon, "whether he has no need *to-day* of a Saviour."

Unto you is born this Day a Saviour. Several years ago an ocean steamer was dashed against the rocks off the coast of Newfoundland, and most of the passengers lost their lives. A telegram reached a Detroit home announcing the drowning of the young man of the household, but within a few hours came another one that said "Saved," and was signed by the man himself. The dispatch which brought such gladness to his wife and mother was framed and hung where all could see it. The message sent on that first Christmas Day announced the birth of the Saviour, and it was sent as good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. The Saviour was born and lived and suffered and died that all men through him might be saved. This glad message should be framed in the hearts of all who hear it.

II The Receivers of the Message

The Shepherds. It was not to learned rabbis but to lowly shepherds at their accustomed toil that the wondrous message came. What have watching shepherds to do with angels' visits? God's revelations come to those who are ready for them, and the humble toiler is quite as likely to have a heart prepared to receive them as the wise scholar or the rich man of leisure.

Successors of the Shepherds. O that we might have been with the shepherds when they had their marvelous vision; might have heard the glad message and might have gone with them to Bethlehem and with them have worshipped the Babe in his manger cradle! Every year thousands take the journey now to Bethlehem and go down into the "Chapel of the Manger" beneath the Church of the Nativity and gaze upon the spot where it is claimed Jesus was born. Do you think the place can bring Jesus any nearer to them?

You have all seen pictures by various artists of the proclamation to the shepherds, and you have seen how the German artist portrays a German landscape, with German shepherds with their flocks and a German village in the distance, while in the French artist's picture, landscape and shepherds and village are laid in France, and the English artist has shown an English scene and English peasants. What do these artists seek to show by their paintings? Is it not the glorious truth that the good tidings proclaimed nineteen hundred years ago was not made to Jewish shepherds in the fields of Bethmlehem alone but to German and French and English and American people of to-day; that the message was a universal one of great joy which shall be to all people? Come, let *us* now go and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto *us*. Let us not be lacking in that great procession of all lands and ages that is in search of the Christ child who is our Saviour.

Receiving the Christ Child. It was Christmas Eve in the great city. As the darkness fell the electric lights flashed out, illuminating the brilliant holiday display in the show windows of the big department stores. Before one of these windows a small Boy stood, hungrily devouring its blaze of color with his eyes, oblivious for the moment to the surging crowd and to the bitter wind that stung his bare feet and hands and searched his threadbare coat. At last he turned away with a sigh, and joined the throng that flowed up the avenue, but all were busy upon their Christmas errands and did not notice the ragged little urchin of the streets. He drifted on, and then paused before a many-storied building, where a string of vehicles were lined up, and into which a stream of richly-gowned people were passing. The boy slipped in unnoticed. He saw the hall was full of shifting groups of people, and that the great dining room beyond was alight with life and warmth and music. The richness of the dress of the lady behind whom he was standing caught his eye. How creamy

and soft it looked! The boy put out one small, rough forefinger and touched it timidly. The lady started, and seeing the ragged little object standing at her elbow, uttered a shriek. Immediately they were surrounded by a group of people.

"Oh! oh! this dreadful little wretch was trying to steal my pocket-book!" the lady exclaimed excitedly. Before the boy had time to collect himself he was half lifted, half dragged down the hall, and shoved roughly into the street.

"You deserve to be arrested, you good-for-nothing little ragamuffin, and if you ever poke your nose inside these doors again, to jail you go!" was the injunction hurled after him by the indignant gilt buttons.

Dazed and faint, the boy picked himself up and hurried into the night. A soft snow was beginning to fall, and the pavements were all moist and slippery. But the Boy scarcely felt the pentrating dampness, for his gaze was attracted by a light that streamed from the window of a large private house across the Avenue. The blinds had not been drawn, and he could see a group of merry youngsters gathered around a huge Christmas tree they were busily trimming.

"Surely, surely," thought the Boy wistfully, "where there are so many children, they would take me in!"

He crossed the street, and, with beating heart, mounted the steps and pulled the bell. A white-capped maid opened the door. As her eyes lit upon the Boy in his tattered clothes, she said sharply: "Go down to the basement, and the cook will give you something to eat. You ought to know better than to come ringing folk's front door bells." And she closed the door in his face.

But he did not go to the basement, for further down the street he heard the call of the church bells, chiming out upon the snowy air, so he hurried on. He joined a few belated worshippers who were hastening into the sacred building, and slipping into one of the rear pews, he sank into the cushioned seat. Presently the fair head slipped down upon the cushions of the pew.

Then he sat up and blinked. The congregation and the white robed singing choir were gone. A rough hand was laid on his shoulder, and a rough voice commanded:—"Come, get out of here, I am closing up for the night." Cold and footsore and weary, the Boy dragged himself into the street once more.

Standing on the corner, he gazed back at the darkened church. "Even my Father's house," he whispered sadly.

Again he wandered on, but this time he turned his steps toward the poorer section of the great city. The snow same down thicker and thicker, and wind blew blusteringly, forcing his stumbling footsteps on. At last, unable to go further, he sank upon a doorstep.

Suddenly he felt a soft touch upon his shoulder and a gentle voice said, "Oh, you poor boy!" Then kind, womanly arms lifted him from the ground and bore him indoors. The room into which he was taken was poor and small and bare, save for a little tinsel-hung Christmas tree on a table in one corner, and a bright fire that crackled in the stove. But the Boy did not notice these things, for his eyes rested upon the sweet face of the woman bending over him and on the bright, pitying eyes of the little girl clinging to her skirts.

"Oh, dear Mamma," said the little girl, "how cold he is and how tired!"

They stripped the Boy of his snow-drenched clothes and wrapping him in a warm blanket, placed him before the stove. The woman knelt before him and rubbed his chilled hands and feet, while the little girl fed him with a spoon, crooning all the while over and over, "I'm so sorry for you, poor little boy! I'm so sorry for you! And I'm so glad dear mamma found you to-night," she bubbled on, "for now you can see our Christmas tree, which mamma bought 'specially for me, because to-night is Christmas Eve, and because ever so long ago a little Baby was born who was named Jesus the Christ."

As the Boy watched the little girl and the sweet mother, his face grew radiantly beautiful, with a radiance such as they had never seen before. He stood before them clothed in robes whose dazzling whiteness filled the room. The eyes he turned upon them were filled with inexpressible love and tenderness, and his voice rang out sweetly joyful.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me," he said.

Then the Presence vanished, leaving them alone.

"Dear Mamma," whispered the little girl, "was it the Christ Child?"

"Yes," replied the mother, and the wonder and the awe of it sang in her voice, as she gathered the child into her arms, "Yes, little daughter, it was the Christ." Condensed from an adaptation from the *German,* by *Anita von Hartmann.*

III The Mystery of the Message

A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. In the analysis of Jesus we find at first the elements of pure humanity. Perhaps at first, with most of his earlier disciples, that is all we recognize; but soon we discover an unclassifiable constituent, which exerts strange and wonderful effects. He is a man, plainly. But, plainly he is man plus. Plus what? and plus how much? Plus purity beyond all; plus the God-consciousness beyond all; plus insight; plus power; plus love; plus a self-assertion at which we cannot grow offended; plus an unconsciousness of sin that seems not blindness, but impartial self-appraisal; plus a demand for submission which we are not compelled to obey, but we cannot deny; plus—what shall we say?—something that grips us with the compelling and mastering power of a Being whose right it is to rule and rule all, and forces us down upon our knees in an ecstasy of love and adoration as though that were the place for us, and no other place could be, or be desired. And, strangely enough, the reading of the Book by a wild English mutineer, or by a Japanese who picks it up watersoaked upon his country's coast, or by a lifelong unbeliever, and these after twenty centuries, brings the same results that contact with him did with men of his day; his face appears, grows, shines, glows, burns itself into the heart, which henceforth is his forever. What is this element we find in this man? Where else in all the universe is there a quality, and a drawing, and a compulsion and a mastery like this? Only in one place. Not in man, not in angel, not in seraph—up where he sits who in love and truth and power is above all; and we exclaim with Peter, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," perfectly showing forth God's every quality, of no other substance, the express image of his person. *Philip Wendell Crannell,* in *The Bibliotheca Sacra.*

A Helpful Analogy. When Mr. Webster was asked if he comprehended Christ's divinity and humanity, he replied: "No sir, I can not; and I should be ashamed to acknowledge him as my Saviour if I could. If I could comprehend him, he could be no greater than myself, and I need a superhuman Saviour." While no one can ever comprehend how Christ could be both God and Man, yet there are faint analogies in human lives which suggest helpful thoughts. One of the best is given by a recent writer from the life of Lewis Carroll, a man more famous for a delightful book for children, Alice in Wonderland, than for his learned treatise on the Differential Calculus. Those who knew Professor Carroll as a distinguished mathematician, a lecturer on its higher branches at Oxford, could not at first believe that he was the author of that most imaginative of all imaginative stories for children. How could one man be so thoroughly at home in two such opposite worlds of thought? It is impossible, they said. And yet it was true, and if a human being who was at home in the abstruse world of knowledge could so incarnate himself, as it were, in child life, must we not readily believe that God, to whom all things are possible, could incarnate himself, and become in one Person perfect Deity and yet perfect Humanity?

I know not, yet I know.

I know not how that Bethleh'm's Babe
Could in the Godhead be;
I only know the manger-child
Has brought God's life to me.

Harry Webb Farrington.

SENTENCE SERMONS

The birth of Jesus is the sunrise of the Bible. *Henry van Dyke.*

He became human that we might become divine. *Athanasius.*

They shall call his name Immanuel, God with us. Mt. 1.23.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Mt. 1.21.

Most human and yet most divine,
The Flower of man and God. *Whittier.*

The first simple, broad, pervading sentiment of Christmas Day ought to be of how sacred and high this human life is into which the Lord was born. *Phillips Brooks.*

If God so loved us, how can we help loving one another? *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

If you can keep Christmas for a day, why not always? But you can never keep it alone. *Henry van Dyke.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. What shall we render unto him for this unspeakable gift?

By thy manger birth deliver me from false standards of greatness. *Hester Alway.*

During the whole year let us be happy over the birth of our Saviour, making ours the song of glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men. As we study throughout the year about his life let us give him a place in all the happenings of our lives, whether of work or play, business or pleasure.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

Girt round with wonders was the birth of our Saviour, and the greatest of all the wonders were manifested to shepherds keeping watch over their flocks at night in the neighborhood of Bethlehem. An angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of the Lord shown around them, filling them with awe and dread till the angel bade them fear not, for his message was one of good tidings to all people: a Saviour, Christ the Lord, had been born that day in Bethlehem, a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger would prove to them that his message was true. Then the shepherds heard a multitude of heavenly host triumphantly chanting praises to God and proclaiming peace to men. No words had the shepherds in reply; they were dumb with amazement till the vision disappeared, and then they said to one another, Let us go at once and see that which the Lord has made known to us. In haste they went, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger as the angel had said. They told the good tidings that they had heard, and all wondered, while Mary, the mother of Jesus, treasured them up in her heart. Like the shepherds who returned praising God, we, too, would add our thanks to God for his unspeakable Gift.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In what respects was the world ready for the coming of the Christ?
2. The Jews under Roman rule.
3. The vision and the return to duty.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. From what book are our first four lessons taken? 2. In what respects are the first three Gospels alike? (Clipping, page 26.) 3. Why do we have four Gospels instead of one? (Clipping, page 25.) 4. What name was given to the Lord's Christ and why was this name given? (Mt. 1.21, 25.) 5. Of what Old Testament name is it another form? (Heb. 4.8.) 6. What can you tell about the ceremony in the temple? (Clipping, page 64.) 7. Why do we call Simeon's hymn "Nunc Dimittis"? (Clipping, page 62.) 8. What can you learn about Alexander the Great? (Clipping, page 18.) 9. What was the effect of his conquest of the Jews? (Clipping, page 18.) See page 14, Suggestions to Teachers.

Questions to think about. 1. How do you know from verse 24 that Mary and Joseph were poor? (Look up the Old Testament reference given in the footnote of your Bible.) 2. What does the word "devout" mean? 3. What does the word "Christ" mean? 4. What is the meaning of Simeon's words in v. 34? (Clipping, page 63.) 5. Of verse 35? (Clipping, page 63.)

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON IV—JANUARY 28

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

Golden Text

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples. Luke 2.30, 31

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 2.22-39. The Presentation in the Temple. **T.** 1 Sam. 1.21-28. Samuel Granted to the Lord. **W.** Judg. 13.6-14. Parents Seeking Guidance. **T.** Gen. 22.1-13. Abraham Offering Isaac. **F.** Luke 18.9-17. Young Children Brought to Jesus. **S.** Ps. 128. Children a Gift of God. **S.** Ex. 13.1-10. The Firstborn Consecrated. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 2.22-39 COMMIT vv 29, 30

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and
this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel: and
the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed unto him by the
Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.
27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought
in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the
law, 28 then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord,
According to thy word, in peace;
30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;
32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were
spoken concerning him: 34 and Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his
mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel;
and for a sign which is spoken against: 35 yea and a sword shall pierce through
thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed. 36 And
there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of
Asher (she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from
her virginity, 37 and she had been a widow even unto fourscore and four
years), who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and sup-
plications night and day. 38 And coming up at that very hour she gave
thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the re-
demption of Jerusalem.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

25-26. *Devout.* The Greek word means literally "God-fearing."—*The consolation of Israel.* The promised Messiah, verse 26.—*The Lord's Christ.* The Lord's anointed.

27. *He came in the Spirit.* Compare Mt. 22.43; Rev. 1.10. "I suppose this means that some inward monition, which he recognized to be of God, sent him there, in the expectation that at last he was to see the Lord's Christ" (*Maclaren*).—*Do concerning him after the custom of the law.* "Although he was the Son of God, it behooved him to be made a child of God through the covenant of Abraham." The sacrifice offered at this time is mentioned in verse 24. See the Historical Background.

29-32. *Now lettest thou thy servant depart.* The beautiful hymn of verses 29-32 has received the name of *Nunc Dimittis,* the first two words of the

sentence in Latin. In these words Simeon does not ask to die now that his greatest wish has been gratified, as many are wont to understand them; he simply states that he recognizes God's appointed time for his death is near. The Greek verb ἀπολύεις is the one used when a sentry's duty is over and he is dismissed: it is well translated in "Nunc Dimittis"—Now thou dost *send away.* The time of his departure had come. He had fought the good fight, he had finished the course, he had kept the faith, and there was laid up for him the crown of righteousness, he was ready to be dismissed.—*Lord.* Greek, *Master,* RVm.—*According to thy word.* See verse 26.—*In peace.* Satisfied and at peace because he had seen the Lord's salvation. The whole song is not one of mere submission to God's will, but of faith and joy and content. Fittingly has the Lutheran Church placed the song in its Communion Service.—*Thy salvation.* The Messiah.—*All peoples.* All nations—The Gentiles and Israel, verse 32.—*For revelation to the Gentiles.* For the unveiling of the Gentiles, RVm.

33-34. *His father.* Joseph fulfilled to Jesus the part of a father.—*This child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel.* Compare Isa. 8.14, He shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence, and Mt. 21.44. The meaning is that some will reject him and "fall," sink spiritually, while others will accept him and "rise," to a high spiritual life.—*For a sign that is spoken against.* As concerning this sect, we know everywhere that it is spoken against, Acts 28.22.

35. *A sword shall pierce through thine own soul.* "A figure strong enough to cover the bitterest experiences of the Mater Dolorosa (Sorrowful Mother), but it does not necessarily imply prevision of the cross" (*Expositor's Greek Testament*).—*That thoughts out of many hearts.* Their true character was declared by their thoughts regarding Jesus.

36-38. *Of a great age.* Greek, *advanced in many days,* RVm. She was eighty-four years old according to the next verse.—*Who departed not from the temple.* This may merely mean who went faithfully to the temple at the hours of prayer, though it is suggested that being a prophetess she may have lived in one of the temple chambers and may have done some regular work such as trimming the lamps there.—*She gave thanks.* Like Simeon, she recognized the infant Jesus as the promised Messiah, the one who was to bring "redemption to Jerusalem."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

35. *That thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.* That is precisely what has happened to multitudes of lives through the teaching of Jesus. He has revealed to them the thoughts of their own hearts and taught them that their best self was their true self. When the prodigal is stirred to repentance, he "comes to himself." He had been dead and is alive again. He had lost himself and now it is himself whom he finds. The faith of Jesus in men produced faith in themselves, and they discovered within themselves thoughts and motives of which they themselves had not dreamed. *Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.*

36. *There was one Anna, a prophetess.* Luke's is the Gospel of Womanhood. The word *woman* occurs in Matthew and Mark together forty-nine times, and in Luke alone, forty-three times. He alone gives the songs of Mary and Elisabeth, and the testimony of Anna. He alone tells of the daughter of Abraham whom Satan had bound, of the widow of Nain, and of the weeping women on the road to Calvary. *Dr. Marvin R. Vincent.*

37. *Who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day.* We old people can be deaf and blind and paralyzed and yet spend our lives acceptably in prayer! The heart can kneel though our poor bodies have to rest in our armchairs. Our dear ones could all have special help that way, and perhaps—specially—those who have not yet learnt to pray for themselves.

Then we should be able to help our ministers, many of them over-burdened and overworked—the Sunday-school teachers and district visitors who have slipped into our places. We could put special days aside to pray for our missionaries and for societies and homes where we know the work aimed at and accomplished is all our Master's. Friends, I can see before me a busier,

happier life than we have ever lived before. No day will be lost because the weather's against us. No visit need be put off because we ourselves are feeling weakly and tired. It's just the work we can do at all times and under all circumstances. It's the work for aged believers—not exclusively, of course, but very specially. *Mrs. G. G. Reaney,* in *Old Hannah's Discovery.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

25. *Looking for the consolation of Israel.* Among the people of this time there were those who were called *Prosdechomenoi,* They that were waiting. Their minds were filled with the life of their nation in the past, they were mourning over her present degradation, her subjection to foreign power, and they were looking for the dawn of a better time which they called the Kingdom of God.

34. *A sign which is spoken against.* To this day Nuzrani, Christian, is—after Jew—the most stinging term of reproach throughout Palestine. Among pagans the Christians were charged with cannibalism and every conceivable atrocity, and Suetonius, Pliny, Tacitus, have no gentler words for Christianity than "an execrable, extravagant, or malefic superstition." *F. W. Farrar,* in *Cambridge Bible.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The shepherds returned to their flocks, and told every one they met of the wonderful vision they had seen, and of the new-born Babe lying in the manger who was to be a great joy to all people. Soon afterwards a more comfortable abiding place was found for the Babe and his mother, and when he was eight days old, he received the name of Jesus. Forty days after his birth Mary and Joseph brought him to the temple to solemnly present him "before the Lord" as the first-born. The First-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me, we read in Ex. 22.29. The custom grew out of the time when the oldest son was consecrated to the priesthood, and there was special fitness in the custom because of the memory of the Passover night when the first-born of the Israelties were saved in the destruction that overtook the Egyptians. The presentation to the priest was an acknowledgment of God's claim, and by the payment of five shekels the Babe was redeemed and given back to his parents.

On the same day the rite of ceremonial purification was fulfilled by Mary, as in the Court of the Women she presented to the priest her offering of a pair of turtle doves. Had she not been poor she would have given a lamb for the burnt offering. It was after the cloud of incense had poured forth from the Golden altar within the Holy Place of the Temple, that the sacrifices were offered on the great stone altar before the door of the Holy Place, while Mary and the other worshippers without prayed and praised God. It was as she was leaving the Court with her Babe that she was met by Simeon.

Simeon, like the rest of his nation, was looking for the Messiah, but while most expected Jesus to be an earthly redeemer, a king who should free them from their foreign oppression, Simeon's heart and character had prepared him for a spiritual Ruler, the Saviour from sin and the Glory of Israel, and the Light to the Gentiles. In simple faith he had gone into the temple that day, and when he saw the Babe his heart told him that here was the long-looked for Saviour.

Jerusalem was six miles north of Bethlehem. See the Geographical Background of the last lesson. It lay upon the mountain range of Judea, twenty-four hundred feet above the sea. The temple, their objective point, appeared to Mary and Joseph as they approached the city "like a mountain covered with snow, for those parts of it that were not gilt were exceeding white." Assign paragraphs 133, 134, 125 and 10-13 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

What little baby have we heard about who was given a name which surprised the friends of his parents? What did the name John mean? Whose birth did we hear about last week? Jesus received his name, too, when he was eight

days old, and cousins and friends came just as they did when John was named. Probably the little six months' old John was brought by his father and mother, Zacharias and Elisabeth, to the home of Jesus, for John and Jesus were cousins. The next thing which we hear about Jesus was what happened when he was six weeks old. His father and mother took him on a journey of six miles. In what city was Jesus born? From Bethlehem to the great city of Jerusalem they went and in the temple they presented him to the Lord, that is, they handed him to the priest who received him and offered a prayer, and then gave him back to his mother. We call the service "The presentation in the Temple." It meant that the Child belonged to God and would be brought up as his child. In this picture (Tissot's No. 5) you see the Child in the priest's arms and Mary, his mother, standing below the steps waiting for his return.

Teach the First Topic. Give each pupil a copy of the stanza on page 71 to learn.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In a book entitled "In Korea with Marquis Ito" there is a pathetic story told of what happened at the home of a missionary who lived near the barracks where the Japanese were quartered until they could be sent to take their part in the war being carried on in China. An officer came upon the porch of the house, and accepted gratefully a cup of tea offered him, but could not tell the object of his visit, as he did not speak English. He soon left and returned with some twenty comrades. And when the hostess was becoming somewhat alarmed at the number for whom she might be expected to furnish tea and cakes, one of the company explained in broken English that they had come to see the baby, a girl about two years old.

The little one was brought out by the mother and placed in the arms of the speaker, who carried her along the line formed of his comrades and gave each one a chance to see her, to smile at her, and to say a few words to her in an unknown tongue.

On going away, after this somewhat formal paying of respects to "the baby," the Japanese officer still further explained. "Madam," said he, "to-morrow morning we are going to the front, and we do not expect ever to return. But before we go to die, we wanted to bid good-by to the baby."

The number of the regiment to which these soldiers belonged was taken note of by the mother. Their expectations came true; they did not return.

In Palestine in the year four of our era there was an aged man who had longed to bid good-bye before he died to a wonderful Babe. Who was the man? What do you know about him? Who was the Babe? Where did he see the Babe? Who had brought him there? Why? How did he know him?

For Older Pupils. When Bishop Brent was visiting in Japan he was asked to officiate at a baptism of Japanese converts. There were three old people waiting to be baptized, and the first to come forward was an old, old man.

"What is your name?" the Bishop asked. And the old man answered, "Simeon," and then he smiled and added, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

What a reverent understanding this old man's choice of a name showed! Let us see if we have gained as much as this aged Japanese had from the story of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Every Child Belongs to God

The Presentation of Jesus. Jesus was presented to God in the temple when six weeks old, according to Jewish custom. When the priests returned the Babe to Mary's arms she knew that he was only entrusted to her care, that he belonged to his Heavenly Father. The first words that we hear from his lips are that he must be in his Father's house, or about his Father's business. And all through his life we see that Jesus knew himself to be God's Son, and that he knew and talked with God as no one else has ever known or talked with him. He was always God's beloved Son in whom he was well pleased.

You are God's from the Beginning of Your Life. This is the story of a dream. It was a winter's Sunday night at the beginning of the year, and at the morning service the minister had been preaching from this text: "The beautiful gate of the temple." And he had been telling that though the old temple at Jerusalem was all burnt up and destroyed hundreds of years ago, yet there were many beautiful gates of God, still opening into glorious temples for us in this world—Gates of Knowledge, Gates of Service, Gates of Self-denial—and he spoke to them particularly about the New Gate of Time, which had just opened for them on the morning of this New Year's Day.

Well, the night wore on, and it became time for them to go to bed, and all the while Mark kept thinking of the words, "The gates, the beautiful gates of God." And then he said, "I wonder what they are? I wonder whether I could find them if I tried? I wonder—I wonder—"

And then something happened, for all at once he found himself dressed, and standing up out-of-doors wide awake. But it was not the out-of-doors he knew—it was quite a different place; for he was in a sort of field or park at the foot of a grand hill, and he could see all about in the distance cottages and houses peeping out amongst the trees. And there was a clear, shining river, sparkling and dimpling in the sunlight as it went along; and there was a long, straight road, leading on and on as far as ever you could see; and there was what Alice in Wonderland would have called "the most curiousest thing of all"; for the place and the road were crowded with children and quite young people—there were scarcely any old folks there at all.

You can very well believe he was surprised; he rubbed his eyes and pinched himself to make sure that he was awake, and then looked again. But there it all was, as natural as life—the park, the river, the houses in the distance, children crowding along the road; and so he said at last, and quite loud, "Where am I, where am I?"

"Well," an old man said, "I'll tell you; you are not on the earth at all. You are in Soul-land, and I have brought you here to show you the beautiful gates of God. Would you like to see them?"

And Mark said, "Oh, yes, sir, that I should!"

But then something happened which surprised Mark very much, for the old man turned right round and went down the road just the opposite way to that in which all the people were going.

They went on, and here was another curious thing, for as they went down the road the children they met kept getting smaller and smaller, and younger and younger, until it seemed that only quite babies were coming along. And by-and-by Mark saw in the distance something glittering, like a pile of snow when the sun is shining on it, only this was so high that you could hardly tell when the top ended among the white clouds of the sky.

They went nearer and nearer, and then Mark saw that it was an enormous Silver Gate, and when they came quite close they could see the gate swing open nearly every minute, and every time the gate swung open a little child came in and began following the rest along the road.

"What is this?" said Mark; "what is this?"

And the old man answered, "It is the Silver Gate of Life, the first of the beautiful gates of God."

"Did I come in there?" asked Mark.

"Yes," was the answer, "you came in there fourteen years ago. And never forget it any more; you were God's from the very beginning, for you came in by one of his beautiful gates, the Silver Gate of Life." Condensed from *The Legend of the Silver Cup* by *George Critchley.*

God is his Children's Keeper. It was two weeks before Children's Day Service in Dr. C. C. Hall's Church and a friend asked him if he had found the right message for that sermon. And when he answered that he was not sure, she asked him to take a text from the Psalms, "The Lord is thy Keeper," and make it a special message to children. "My mother gave me those words when I was a child, she wrote them in my Bible, and they have helped me all my life," she said. "Surely they will help other children as they have helped me."

Dr. Hall talked that day upon this text and these are some of his words (from the "Silver Cup"). When that mother wrote on the fly-leaf of her little daughter's Bible, "The Lord is thy keeper," I think she wrote the most beautiful

and the most helpful thought about God that can enter into a child's soul. I am sure she hoped that, through the influence of those words, her child might be drawn very near to God, and might have a perfect trust in him always. I shall never forget the day when a little companion of mine threw his arms about me, and walked at my side saying, "Papa! you and I are great friends." And every obedient child of the Heavenly Father may look up into his face and say without doubt, "Thou and I are great friends, and Thou art my Keeper."

II The End lies in the Beginning

Prophetic Vision. The aged Simeon held in his arms the month-old-Babe and said exultantly, Now, Lord, mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. "Simeon had not seen the salvation at all," writes Mr. Frederick Lynch in "Christian Work." "He had seen nothing of the wonderful things Jesus was going to do during the next thirty years; he had seen nothing of the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Greece, Rome, then Europe and America; had seen nothing of the miraculous transformations it was going to work; nothing of that salvation that has been the one glory of over two thousand years; he saw simply a little Baby in its mother's arms. Yet he *had* seen it, for he had seen the light lighted, and having once been lighted, it must light all the world; he had seen the truth-Speaker, and when the Speaker comes the truth will go on until it sets all men free; he had seen the presence of God in the Infant's eyes, and the incarnation in one Man means the incarnation in all men some day; he had seen the love-light in the Child's face, and let one man begin to love as God loves, and then some day love will become the law of humanity. Simeon looked on Christ and then his eyes swept the future in prophetic vision and he saw all these things coming to pass. The end lay in the beginning.

"And there came to me a flood of other instances where this same vision had come to other men. I rememembered the old Roman story. The Gospels say little about slavery. The Epistles do not denounce it as an institution; they only urge a Christian attitude toward the slave. The early Church had little to say about it. But there was one man in Rome who had felt that slavery was inhuman, and contradicted the laws of God. One day he entered one of the new Christian churches, and, to his amazement, he saw a master and slave kneeling side by side at the same altar, receiving the communion together as equals—for the moment, at least—and he said, in spirit, "Now, O Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen my heart's desire—the end of slavery." The end? Yes. It lasted nearly two thousand years. It filled Africa, Asia, Europe and America with misery and cost rivers of human blood. He saw no diminution of the custom. Yet he had seen the end when he saw that master and that slave kneeling together there."

Mr. Lynch recalls also how Stanley found Livingstone dying in the heart of Africa, alone, except for the natives, who loved and tended him. And how Livingstone, who had made no more impression on that vast continent of darkness than a candle makes in the Mammoth Cave, died with a light in his face, saying that Africa had been saved to Christ and civilization—died singing, with Simeon, "Now, O Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." And truly he saw it. It is coming fast.

He recalls a conversation held in Munich, in 1907, when he sat with Frederic Passy, now nearly ninety, the originator of the peace movement in France, and Baroness Von Suttner, the originator of the peace movement in Austria. Mr. Passy was saying how for years he had worked alone and amid the jeers and scorn of men, "but to-day," he said, "as we sit here in Munich all the world is together in one room trying to establish a court of nations to take the place of war. I am ready to go. I am very old and cannot stay much longer. But it matters not. I have seen the salvation; now I can go." And he used just those words of Simeon, "I have seen the salvation; now I can go."

To-day lovers of peace can rejoice and feel, with even more certitude, that the end lies in the beginning, for Mr. Carnegie's great Christmas gift to the world in 1910 of ten millions was given "to hasten the abolition of international war." Mr. Carnegie himself saw the end in the beginning, for with the gift he made

the provision that when universal peace shall have been established the income of the fund may be used for the next great crying evil.

A Great Gift. I covet the gift of a sanctified imagination, which can look down long highways into distant futurity. For instance, when an apostle like Paul walks into imperial Rome, utterly unheeded and ignored, I would like the power of being able to foresee some of the amazing possibilities of that lonely entrance. When James Gilmour crosses the frontier into Mongolia, and sets his single plough to the upturning of the soil in that mighty land, I would have the eye that can see coming harvests, vast reaches of waving corn, shining ripe before the face of the Lord. When the New Testament is translated into a new language I would have the power of seeing the tremendous influence of the modest Book, the light it will bring, and the warmth, and the moving air, and the genial liberty. *Dr. J. H. Jowett,* in an address.

III Missionary Topic A Light to Bring Light to the Gentiles

The Light of the World. . The good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people, was the angel's message that announced the birth of the Saviour. "The world view gets before us early." And it is the world view that the Saviour left as his last message to his disciples when he said, Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations.

As Simeon sings, he is the Light that brings light to all people. There are two famous pictures which show forth this truth. The first is Correggio's Adoration of the Shepherds. The Christ-child is in a stable, it is night, and a little rude lamp hanging from the roof scarcely sheds a ray of light, yet the whole place is aglow with a soft, gentle light that streams from the Christ lying in the manger, the Light that came to bring light. The other picture is Holman Hunt's "The Light of the World," which represents the Saviour with the crown of thorns upon his brow, his radiant face and his whole person emanating a light that reaches far into the gloom.

The Universal Saviour. It has been said, remarks Dr. Watkinson, that a nation is not made by men but by man, and history supplies many illustrations of the truth of the saying. An individual arises out of an obscure and unorganized people, and by his extraordinary power and prowess welds feeble, scattered tribes into a great, conquering empire. A solitary genius creates nations, makes history for ages. One man, like Alexander or Napoleon, changes the map of the world; another, like Caxton, the intellectual character of the world; another, like Newton or Darwin, the science of the world; another, like Watt or Stephenson, the industrial aspects of the world; so once appeared One who touched and transformed the moral thought and life of the world. Not in Judea, or Greece, or Rome, but everywhere. The Saviour of the World!

Coming into the Light. A native of Burma read a Burmese copy of the Psalms which a traveler left at his house and he was convinced that he must give up idol worship and worship the Eternal God there revealed. For twenty years he used the fifty-first Psalm as a daily prayer, and then a missionary gave him a New Testament. With great joy he read for the first time the story of Jesus Christ. "Twenty years I have walked by starlight," he exclaimed, "but now I see the sun."

The Proof that Jesus came to bring Light to All Peoples. One of the first converts of Neesima in Japan was an influential citizen of a suburb of Kioto. When it became known he was at once summoned to appear before the Kioto magistrates. In the course of the conversation, one of the officials said: "We have good and sufficient religion here in Japan; we do not want any more. We have Confucianism for scholars like you, and Buddhism for the masses."

To this Neesima replied: "If Confucianism is an all-sufficient religion, why is it, since the founder lived thousands of years before Christ and taught during a long life, that it has not spread beyond China and Japan? And if Buddhism is an all-sufficient religion, how is it, started by Buddha thousands of years before Christ, and taught by him through a long life, that it has not spread beyond, India, China and Japan? And if Christianity is a bad religion, how is it, since its Founder only taught three years, and was put to death when he

was thirty-three years old, that it has spread all over Europe and America, and is spreading all over Africa and Asia and all the islands of the sea?"

SENTENCE SERMONS

And the desire of all nations shall come. Haggai 2.7.

Men do not enter heaven because they have seen the shadow of the Sovereign, but because they have embraced and loved and served the Saviour. *Joseph Parker.*

Admit and then transmit the Light of God in Christ. *Andrew Murray.*

Take thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of thee! *Whittier.*

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. Isa. 60.1.

His name shall endure forever;
His name shall be continued as long as the sun;
And men shall be blessed in him;
All nations shall call him happy. Psa. 73.17.

We may go in peace, if our eyes have seen him who satisfies our vision, whose bright presence will go with us into the darkness, and whom we shall see more perfectly when we have passed to the home above. *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Who Simeon was we are not told, what he was we are carefully informed. It is not fame nor position nor wealth nor circumstances that counts, but character.

Happy he who has seen Jesus with the eyes of faith and has found in him the salvation which God has prepared for him.

Each one of us is revealed like Simeon by the things that make us satisfied and happy.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The beauty of a devout old age.
2. A saint's welcome of approaching death.
3. The revealing of the heart. See article with this title in *The Outlook*, March 18, '11.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Who were the Wise-men? (Clipping, page 70.) 2. Where did the chief priests and scribes learn that Bethlehem was the birthplace of the Christ? (See footnote in your Bible.) 3. What kind of man was Herod? 4. What good things had he done for the Jews, and of what crimes had he been guilty? (Clipping, page 24, and Biblical encyclopædias.) 5. What did Herod do when the Wise-men did not return to him? (Mt. 2.16-18.) 6. How did the Christ-Child escape? (Mt. 2.13-14.) 7. To what city did Joseph and Mary go with Jesus on returning from Egypt? (Mt. 2.19-23.) 8. What city did Alexander the Great found in Egypt, and what translation of the Bible was made for the Jews who afterwards lived there? (Clipping, page 19.)

Questions to think about. 1. How could the Wise-men have heard about the expected coming of the King of the Jews? (Clipping, page 71.) 2. Why did they come to Jerusalem? 3. Why did the question of the Wise-men trouble Herod? 4. Why did it trouble all Jerusalem? (Clipping, page 69.) 5. Why did Herod ask so carefully about the time of the appearance of the star? (See verse 16.) 6. Did Herod mean what he told the Wise-men he would do, verse 8? (Mt. 2.16.) 7. What effect did their search have upon the Wise-men, the parents of Jesus, the chief priests and scribes, Herod, the people of Jerusalem, the people of Bethlehem? 8. In what ways did the Wise-men show their reverence for the "King of the Jews"? 9. What is the meaning of the visit of the Wise-men to the Babe in Bethlehem?

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17, Introduction.

LESSON V—FEBRUARY 4

THE WISE MEN LED BY THE STAR

Golden Text

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. Isa. 45.22

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 2.1-12. The Wise Men Led by the Star. **T.** Num. 24.10-19. The Star out of Jacob. **W.** Isa. 60.1-14. Rejoicing in the Light. **T.** Isa. 60.15-22. Zion Glorified. **F.** Isa. 11.1-10. Coming of the Gentiles. **S.** Ps. 72.8-17. Gentiles Flocking to the King. **S.** Rev. 22.13-21. The Bright, the Morning Star. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Matthew 2 COMMIT vv 1, 2

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod
the king, behold, Wise-men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, 2 Where
is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are
come to worship him. 3 And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled,
and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And gathering together all the chief priests
and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born.
5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written
through the prophet,
6 And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Art in no wise least among the princes of Judah:
For out of thee shall come forth a governor,
Who shall be shepherd of my people Israel.
7 Then Herod privily called the Wise-men, and learned of them exactly what
time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and
search out exactly concerning the young child; and when ye have found *him,*
bring me word, that I also may come and worship him. 9 And they, having
heard the king, went their way; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east,
went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And
they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and
they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered
unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned *of*
God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their
own country another way.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *Jesus.* The Greek form of *Joshua,* a name meaning "God is Salvation." —*In the days of Herod the King.* This was "Herod the Great," the founder of the Herodian family, who reigned from 37 to 4 B. C. Throughout New Testament history we hear of him and his descendants. See page 23. As Jesus was born at least many months before Herod's death, the date can not be later than 5 B. C. See page 53.—*Wise-men.* Greek, *Magi.* Compare Esther 1.13; Dan. 2.12; Acts 13.6, 8, RVm. See page 70.—*Jerusalem.* At the capital they would naturally expect to learn about the Messiah's birth.—*Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* Or, *Where is the King of the Jews that is born?* RVm. It is not strange that the Wise-men should be familiar with the Jewish expectations of the birth of the Messiah: see Light from Oriental Life.—*His star in the east.* Kepler calculated that in 6 B. C. there was a remarkable conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars, which was followed by the sudden appearance of a remarkably colored evanescent star, the star of the Magi. The account in Matthew seems to indicate a supernatural phenomenon.—*Worship.*

The Greek word denotes an act of reverence whether paid to a creature (see ch. 4.9; 18.26) or to the Creator (see 4.10), RVm.

3-5. *He was troubled.* He feared a supplanter.—*All Jerusalem with him.* Probably because they feared Herod, for they well knew his cruelty. Josephus says that two years before this Herod had ordered a wholesale slaughter of the leading Pharisees because of his jealous fear of them. Later he had slain those who prophesied that the throne would soon pass from him and his line.—*Chief priests.* The priests were the officers of the temple who offered the sacrifices. "*Chief priests* probably designated a high-priestly party consisting of the high priest proper, the ex-high priests, and the members of those privileged families from which the high priests were drawn" (*Hastings Dictionary*).—*Scribes.* This class is first heard of after the Babylonian captivity, Neh. 8.1. "The prophet passed off the stage. The scribe or lawyer took his place. The mastery and administration of the Torah (the Mosaic Law) developed in the Scribe a variety of functions which with us are parcelled out among preacher, scholar, lawyer, and magistrate. He came to occupy a great position in the Jewish community. As a class, they had their noble side. Their work, both educational and judicial, was gratuitous. But their position encouraged vast pride and vanity. They loved the title of 'Rabbi'" (Adapted from *Hastings Dictionary*).—*The Christ.* The Messiah.—*The prophet.* Micah.

6. This is a free paraphrase of Micah 5.2. See page 70. Dr. Broadus thus explains it: Micah uses an antique name—*Bethlehem Ephratah.* Matthew takes the common Old Testament form, *Bethlehem Judah* and prefixes "land," as when we say, "Richmond, State of Virginia." Micah says, Thou art little to be among the thousands of Judah (yet) out of thee, etc., meaning that it is a small and insignificant place, scarcely worthy to be numbered among the towns of Judah—yet out of it would come, etc. Matthew turns toward the moral importance of Bethlehem, as derived from this very fact, and so he puts it, *art* in no wise the least among the leaders of Judah, for out of thee, etc. *Thousands* was an antique designation of the great families into which the tribes were subdivided, and was applied by Micah to a town as a residence of such a family; while Matthew uses the more familiar term *governor* or *prince,* meaning those who by birth stood at the head of the great families, and might therefore represent them or their abode.—*Shepherd.* See Jn. 21.16.

7-8. *Privily.* Privately, secretly.—*What time the star appeared.* Or, *the time of the star that appeared,* RVm. He suspects that he may not see the Magi again and would learn where to find the Child himself.—*That I also may come and worship him.* The Magi might believe this was his purpose, but a Jew would know better. His true purpose is shown in verse 16.

9-11. *The star went before them and stood over where the young child was.* This may be "a poetical way of saying that the star guided them to Jesus."—*The house.* The Child was no longer in the manger: a temporary abode had doubtless been easily secured after the departure of the crowds that had come to the enrollment, last lesson.—*Gifts.* Gifts are always brought by those who visit kings and princes; see Gen. 43.11; 1 K. 10.2.—*Gold, frankincense and myrrh.* The costliest products of their country. Frankincense and myrrh are aromatic gums.—*Another way.* See the Geographical Background.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *We are come to worship him.* Many people now write as if religion were for the Magi only. They make of it a mystery, a philosophy, an opinion, a doctrine, which only the scholars of the time can appreciate, and which plain people can obey, but can not understand. Many people, on the other hand, think that religion is for plain people only; good for shepherds, but outgrown by magi; a star that invites the superstitious and ignorant to worship; but suggests to scholars only a new phenomenon for science to explore.

But religion has both these aspects, and offers both these invitations. Religion is not theology. There are many things which are hidden from the Magi, and are revealed to simple shepherds. But religion, on the other hand, is not all for the simple. The central subject of the highest wisdom to-day is, as it always has been, the relation of the mind of man to the universe of God. The magi and the shepherd met at the cradle of the Christ. *Professor Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Mornings in the College Chapel.*

5. *Thus it is written through the prophet.* The long-looked-for Messiah came and it was found that all the prophets had been right. Each prophecy was literally fulfilled. He was born in Bethlehem as Micah foretold (Micah 5.2); he was called out of Egypt as Hosea had prophesied (Mt. 2.15); he was a Nazarene as the prophets had said (Mt. 2.23); he dwelt at Capernaum in the coasts of Zebulon and Naphtali, and thus Isaiah's prophecy (Isa. 9.1, 2) was fulfilled; he came to the temple as Malachi (Mal. 3.1) foretold; and he rode in triumph into Jerusalem as Zechariah (Zech. 9.9) described. Before he came it was quite impossible to explain how all these could in turn be fulfilled, but yet all came true. *Ada R. Habershon* in *The Rabbis' Discussion.*

8. *That I also may come and worship him.*

> Hateful to me as are the gates of hell,
> Is he who, hiding one thing in his heart,
> Utters another. *Homer.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *Wise-men from the East.* In Acts 13.6 the same Greek name (μαγος, Latin *Magi*) in the singular is translated *sorcerer* as applied to Elymas. From this Greek word comes our word *magician.* Elymas was an imposter, but the Magi or Wise-men of Matthew belonged to the earlier priestly class famous among the Medes, Persians, and Babylonians for their knowledge of astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and religious mysteries. They were nature worshippers, who reverenced the elements, fire, air, earth, water. The tradition that there were three Wise-men—Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar—may have originated from the fact that their gifts were of three kinds, verse 11.

2. *We saw his star in the east.* It was quite in keeping with Jewish belief to find indications of great events in the appearances of the heavens, for their ancient Scriptures (Num. 24.17) spoke of a star that should come out of Jacob, and they had long referred the prophecy to their expected Messiah. It was, indeed, universally believed that extraordinary events, especially the birth and death of great men, were heralded by appearances of stars, and still more of comets, or by the conjunction of the heavenly bodies. Belief in the influence of the stars over life and death, and in special portents at the birth of great men, survived to recent times. Shakespeare tells us—

> "When beggars die there are no comets seen;
> The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."
> *Dr. Cunningham Geikie,* in *The Life of Christ.*

2. *We are come to worship him.* To pay homage to him according to the eastern custom of prostrating themselves before him.

6. After the Scriptures were read in the Synagogues in Hebrew the words were translated into Aramaic, the dialect understood by the people, by a Methurgeman or Interpreter. These translations were not always exactly literal but "a sort of interpretating translation." This accounts for the difference between the words of Matthew and of Micah, for as Edersheim remarks, the New Testament writers would "targum" (these interpretations were called Targums) as Christians.

11. *They offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.* It was customary in the East to approach kings and princes with a gift in the hand. Even formal visits among friends are preceded by the presentation of gifts; the refusal to accept them is received as a mark of enmity. When Jacob returned from Paddan-Aram and sent his presents to Esau, who had come to meet him, he was anxious about their acceptance. The Queen of Sheba brought Solomon spices, gold and precious stones. The Wise-men brought the gifts most highly valued in their land. The frankincense and myrrh were costly gums obtained from trees; they were used for medicinal purposes and for embalming.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It was not many weeks after Jesus was presented in the temple that three strangers, splendidly attired and mounted on camels with rich trappings ac-

A. Edelfelt

THE ADORATION OF THE WISE MEN

cording to tradition, rode into Jerusalem and asked to be directed to Herod's palace. They had come on a strange search, for they would see the young Prince who was born King of the Jews, and they thought that from Herod they could learn his birthplace.

The expectation based on the predictions of their prophets, of the advent of a great King who should be their national Deliverer, had for centuries filled the minds and hearts of the Jews. In the days of Herod "many were persuaded that it was contained in the ancient books of their priests," according to Tacitus, "that at that very time the East should prevail, and that some one should proceed from Judea and possess the dominion." Jewish synagogues existed throughout the East, and exerted a wide influence. The Jews of the Dispersion made known their expectation wherever they went, and it may have been from them that it reached the Wise-men. And it may have been that the predictions ascribed to their own prophet Zoroaster, which pointed to three deliveries, led these Wise-men to see the greatest of the three in the King of the Jews.

Whatever prophecy made them expect a great King, however mistaken their idea of his kingship, and however false may have been the astrological notions which led them to watch the stars for one that announced his birth, these all aroused them to make their long pilgrimage to Bethlehem and lay their tributes at the feet of the Infant Jesus, the spiritual King of the world. God used their imperfect knowledge to make known his perfect truth.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The journey of the Wise-men, whether they came from Babylonia or Persia, must have taken many months. Their interview with Herod took place at Jerusalem, and they found the Babe at Bethlehem, six miles southwest of Jerusalem, not in the manger-cradle, but in the house that was the temporary home of the family. As they returned without passing through Jerusalem they either went south to Hebron and Idumea, or northeastward to Jericho and the Jordan, and then eastward. Assign paragraphs 133, 134 and 14-16, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Make this story of the Wise-men's visit to the Infant Jesus most beautiful and interesting. Show first a picture of the desert and sand with the camels and travelers in their oriental costumes, the clear sky and the one bright star, brighter than all the rest—Portael's "Following the Star," Brown No. 1563, and Tissot's, New Testament No. 4. When you reach the scene where the Wise-men find the Christ-Child, show Hofmann's "Adoration of the Magi," Wilde No. 20. Talk about the gift that Christ wants to-day from each one. Tell the lesson the Indian learned who came to a missionary with a belt that he thought very beautiful and said, "I will give this belt that Jesus may love me," but the missionary told him that this was not the gift Jesus wanted. Then he brought his rifle and some game; a third time he came and offered his wigwam; and finally after being taught by the missionary, he said he knew what gift it was that Jesus wanted, himself. Call for this stanza of Eugene Field's which you gave your pupils to learn:

Nor crown, nor robe, nor spice I bring
As offering unto Christ, my King.
Yet have I brought a gift the Child
May not despise, however small;
For here I lay my heart to-day,
And it is full of love to all.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Review the last two lessons and then teach the Historical Background.

For Older Pupils. Question your class about Herod. Possibly you will find that their minds, like those of some adults I know, hold a composite picture made up of all the Herods in the Bible: a hydra-headed monster he is to

them, who put to death all the babes in Bethlehem, who ordered the head of John the Baptist brought into his feast on a charger, who stretched forth his hands to vex the Church and put James the brother of John to the sword, and because this pleased the Jews proceeded to take Peter also, and who finally met a justly hideous end by being eaten by worms. Tell your pupils that the law does not read that the sins of the children to the third and fourth generation shall be visited upon the parents, and fix in their minds once for all the various Herods each with his properly accredited crimes.

It was Herod the Great (37 B. C. to 4 A. D.) who was "King of the Jews" when Jesus was born. See p. 23 of the Introduction. It was when his life was nearing its end, when he was insanely jealous and suspicious of a usurper of his throne, that the Wise-men from the east came to him with the question which no one in Palestine would have dared ask—Where is he that is born King of the Jews.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Obedient unto the Heavenly Vision

The Wise-men's Obedience to their Vision. It was a time of testing for the Wise-men of the East when they saw the star which told them that Jesus was born. It was a long journey that they had to undertake; if they came from no more distant region than Babylon it would be four months before they could reach Jerusalem. And how could they find the Babe in Jerusalem? They might well have hesitated to set forth on so difficult an errand. But they were men of faith and men of action; they were "obedient to the heavenly vision," and they sought and found the Child Jesus.

The Artist's Obedience to his Vision. The famous artist, James Tissot, many of whose beautiful pictures you have seen reproduced in this and earlier issues of *The Guide,* was led through obedience to a vision to devote his talents to portraying scenes in the life of Christ and other Bible scenes. He was planning a series of pictures of "The Parisian Woman" and went one day to a church in Paris to make a study of "a fashionable woman posing as a religious devotee." As he sat there a vision came to him. He seemed to see the ruins of a great castle. A weary peasant and his wife were sitting down to rest. On the ground by their side was a bundle that contained all their earthly possessions. As they sat there in despair, the "Man of Sorrows" came and sat beside them, putting his hand in tender protecting care on the peasant's shoulder. "Christ, the Consoler," was the artist's interpretation of the vision.

He returned to his studio, but the vision would not leave him. In his despair at not being able to continue the work in which he had formerly delighted, he became seriously ill. When he recovered he decided to paint his vision of "Christ, the Consoler," in order to put it for ever from his mind. But as he worked, the grandeur of his theme grew upon him. He went to Palestine and studied the surroundings in which Christ had lived, and he has given to the world a marvelous series of pictures of Christ and his disciples.

Our Obedience to the Vision. God's revelations call for response. As Dr. Henry Burton says: It does not matter in what language heaven speaks to us, or what special portent it gives to us—indeed there may be no portent at all, it may be in ways so simple, so perfectly natural—but everything depends upon our attitude toward the voice or vision. May our attitude be that of Professor Harry Lyman Koopman, who utters this great prayer:

When I am dead,
May this with truth be said,
On the rude stone that marks my lowly head,
That, spite of doubt and indecision,
In spite of weakness, lameness, blindness,
Heart's treachery and fate's unkindness,
Neglect of friends and scorn of foes,
Stark poverty and all its woes,
The body's ills that cloud the mind

And the bold spirit bind,
Still through my earthly course I went,
Not disobedient
Unto the Heavenly Vision.

II SEEKERS WHO ARE ALWAYS FINDERS

The Seeking must be Earnest. To be a seeker, wrote Oliver Cromwell to his daughter, is to be of the best sect next to a finder, and such shall every earnest seeker be in the end. Ye shall search for me and find me, when ye shall seek for me with all your hearts. It is only the earnest seeker, the one who, like these Wise-men, seeks with all his heart, who is in the end the finder.

There are different ways of seeking, as these words condensed from a chapter in "The Silver Cup," by Dr. C. C. Hall, show:

"Seek," said Jesus, "and ye shall find." I think I can make you all understand what Jesus means when he says "Seek," if I tell you about some of the different ways in which the word "seek" can be used. There is a game called "blind-man's buff." You know how it is played. You choose one person, and you bind a handkerchief over his eyes, and then you make him seek the other persons in the room. And of course the fun of the game is to make it as hard as possible for the person who is seeking. It is make-believe seeking, not real seeking. You go through the form of seeking, but everybody knows that it is not real seeking, because you are keeping your eyes bound by a handkerchief.

Then there is another kind of seeking. Not long ago certain friends of mine went to Boston and stayed at a hotel. They had some work to do in the city and when it was done they tried to find their hotel. They went up this street and down that street, but the hotel could not be found; they wandered till they were tired, and, strange to say, they did not ask anybody to tell them the way to the hotel. At last they called a cabman and told him to drive them to this hotel. He laughed as they got into his carriage. What did he do? He just took them around the corner, and there was the hotel not one minute away. The mistake in that seeking was that they asked no questions.

But there is another kind of seeking. I knew a boy who at fifteen was a thinker and a seeker. To seek was the chief purpose of his life. Though so young a boy, he felt that he was living in a wonderful world, full of powers of strength, and beauty, and the great desire of his heart was to understand things. And that desire seemed to lift him above what was foolish and what was wrong. He wanted to understand the works of God—the sun, the moon, the stars, electricity, light, sound, heat; he wanted to understand the working of the reason; he was full of questions and he asked them, and was getting his answer, and although he died at fifteen, I can truly say that his life could be well expressed in these words: Seek, and ye shall find.

I have spoken of two kinds of seeking which are mistaken kinds; the blindfolded seeking which is nothing but a make-believe seeking, when the eyes are kept shut; and the seeking which is ashamed or afraid to ask questions. I will now try to tell you what I believe is really the message of these great and beautiful words of our Lord Jesus: Seek, and ye shall find. I find in these words the great truth that you were made for the purpose of thinking and asking questions. When you get to thinking thoughts that puzzle you and trouble you, do not feel that you must keep them to yourselves. Seek till you find some one who cares to hear what you are thinking, and who may be able to help you. He who has given us these marvelous thinking powers has given us marvelous things to think about. And I find in this precious verse a promise. He who gave you this thinking mind, he who gave you these great mysteries in the world around you, in the Bible, in his own self, to think about, he says, Seek, and ye shall find. For God himself, in his Holy Spirit, loves to meet the thinking child, to answer his questions, to lead him on in the great path of truth.

Ask—and you shall receive.
Seek—and you shall find.
Knock—and it shall be opened unto you.

The Certainty of Success. Seek, and ye shall find. As certainly and inevitably as day follows night and spring follows the summer—by a law as invariable and immutable as the law of gravitation—he that seeketh, findeth. There are some searches in which men have engaged which have had failure at the end of them. They have sought for the elixir of life, and failed. They have searched for that wondrous stone which was to change everything it touched into gold, and failed. But here is a search that never fails. "They that seek me shall find me."

Yes, if you are in real earnest about it, the day will come when you shall acquaint yourselves with God and be at peace. The happy day will dawn when you, too, like Philip, will be able to cry, "We have found him for whom our hearts panted and languished and yearned. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

III Missionary Topic The Search for Jesus

The Search is from All the Ends of the Earth. In this visit of the Wise-men to the young Child, the Christian Church has seen a deep significance, for the visit not only testified to the kingly character of Jesus but symbolized as well the coming of the King to the Gentile world. It is the Epiphany, or "Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles." That God awakens in human souls in all the ends of the earth, in the language of our Golden Text, a longing for their Saviour, even as he led the Wise-men to seek and find him as a Babe, is the lesson of the record. They were guided by the star, others are guided by the words of the Scriptures, by the words of men filled with the Spirit. Far and wide, as an ancient hymn expresses it, pants for him each mortal breast.

A Norwegian missionary went in 1879 to the island of Tongoa, one of the New Hebrides group, whose natives were cannibals. Twice a year, at the time of the sowing and again at the harvest, they called upon God, but at other times worshipped many gods. Soon after his arrival he was taken ill with fever, and while still unable to sit up he received a visit from the chief named Matabuti. The chief greeted him with these words: "I am heartily glad that you have come to this island. A long time ago I had a wonderful dream, I saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven where God was sitting. As soon as you came, I knew that you are the man belonging to the ladder. Come to my village and tell us what you know about that ladder." In twenty years, through the efforts of this one missionary, all the natives of the island had become Christians. Without Matabuti's help the change could not have been wrought so quickly. Was not Matabuti led by God through his dream, even as the Wise-men by the vision of the star, to seek and find the King? "Each ear may hear the angels sing, each eye may see the shining star."

Give us your Christ, was the earnest appeal of the people of Japan when Henry Drummond was about to leave them and return to Europe. Give us your Christ, is the unconscious appeal of the Hindus whose weary pilgrimages and senseless penances show their desire and need. Give us your Christ, is the appeal of the people of every land and every tongue.

A True Story from Our Own Land. Groping more blindly than the starled men who sought the Babe in Bethlehem, came a seeker at whose isolated mountain home in southeastern Missouri a Sunday-school missionary had stopped for a lodging. The family of six gathered in a semicircle around the fireplace—Dad on the right leaning up against the mantel and his oldest boy on the opposite side, a young man of twenty, who could neither read nor write, and had never seen a railroad. Dad began: "I wish you would explain this Christmas business to us. A year ago in December, our neighbors over here got a box from the East and they called it a Christmas box and they invited us over and gave us candy and lots of good things to eat, and some cards that had 'Christmas Greetings' on them. I guess some of them are around here yet, ain't they, Old Woman? Well, we asked them to tell us what they meant by Christmas, but they couldn't tell us very well, and the Old Woman 'low'd you'd know; so go to it and explain the whole business. I don't care nuthin' about it, but these kids just run me crazy about it." And this is right here in the midst of our Christian civilization and within twenty-five miles of a railroad. Have we been enough interested in missions to help see that at

least in our own land all shall have a chance to know what Christmas means? Condensed from *Kingdom Comments.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

"Our souls were made for God and they are restless until they find him."

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her king."

Follow you the star that lights a desert pathway, yours or mine,
Forward till you see the highest Human Nature is Divine. *Tennyson.*

I have not far to go to find him, for over every path of duty is an open heaven and the bright shining of the star which, if followed, always leads to him. *J. Stuart Holden.*

Christ's birth as the Babe of Bethlehem has made the little child almost divine in its sacredness. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

Whatsoever sort of wise-men they were before, now they begin to be wise-men indeed when they set themselves to inquire after Christ. *Matthew Henry.*

We hear divine messages and see heavenly visions enough, but too often we let them fade into forgetfulness and pass into nothingness. *James H. Snowden.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Wise-men they were in very truth, and "wise-men" in very truth we shall be, if like them we seek and worship the Christ.

The Wise-men brought their best to the Christ-Child. Shall we not also? Eugene Field's gift is our best gift:

Yet have I brought a gift the Child
May not despise, however small;
For here I lay my heart to-day,
And it is full of love to all!

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The friendship of science and religion. See the *Literary Digest* for Oct. 1, 1910.
2. The pathos of the search for God by those who believe the Eastern religions.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What happened between the visit of the Wise-men and Jesus' visit to the temple? (Mt. 2.13-23.) 2. How old was Jesus when he went to the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem? 3. Read about the Passover in Dt. 16.1-8. 4. How early did the Jewish boy go to the temple? (Clipping, p. 76.) 5. What was the prophecy of Isa. 11.2? 6. Locate Nazareth and Jerusalem. 7. Describe Nazareth. (Clipping, p. 78.) 8. What does the verb *waxed* mean? (Dictionary.) 9. What instruction did Hebrew children receive in the home according to Dt. 6:6-7? 10. Read Prov. 3.1-4 and Rom. 14.17-18 to see what will cause one to find favor with God and man. 11. Describe a home such as the humble one in Nazareth. (Clipping, p. 78.) 12. What other children were there in Jesus' home? (Mk. 6.3.) 13. What were Jesus' first recorded words? 14. What became of Alexander's kingdom on his death? 15. What nations long contended for possession of Palestine, and under whose rule were the Jews until 200 B. C.? (Clipping, p. 21.)

Questions to think about. 1. What did the Passover commemorate? 2. What was "the custom of the feast," verse 42? 3. What is meant by "fulfilled the days," verse 43? 4. Was it surprising that Jesus was not missed till halt was made at night? (Clipping, p. 78.) 5. In what spirit were Jesus' first words to his mother spoken? 6. What do you think his entire answer to his mother meant? 7. Why was it necessary for Jesus to go back with his parents to Nazareth instead of beginning at this time his public work? 8. From Jesus' later words what do we know he must have seen in his youth? (Clipping, p. 80.)

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, p. 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON VI—FEBRUARY 11

THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Golden Text

How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house? Luke 2.49

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 2.40-52. The Boy Jesus in the Temple. **T.** Ps. 122.1-9. Joy of Church-going. **W.** Deut. 16.1-8. The Passover. **T.** Prov. 8.1-13. Wisdom. **F.** Prov. 2.1-9. The Lord Giveth Wisdom. **S.** Deut. 6.20-25. Instructing Children. **S.** Eph. 6.1-8. Obedience. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 2.40-52 COMMIT vv 46, 47

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace
of God was upon him.
41 And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover.
42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the
feast; 43 and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy
Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not; 44 but sup-
posing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought
for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance: 45 and when they found him
not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. 46 And it came to pass,
after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the
teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions: 47 and all that heard
him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when they
saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast
thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. 49
And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must
be in my Father's house? 50 And they understood not the saying which he
spake unto them. 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth;
and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all *these* sayings in her
heart.
52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and
men.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

40. *Waxed.* An Old English word for *grew.*—*Filled with wisdom.* Or, *becoming full of wisdom,* RVm. The Greek πληρούμενον is a present participle, and signifies *a continuous process of being filled.* Like all normal boys, Jesus grew in wisdom as well as in stature.

41-45. *His parents.* Before the law, Joseph was his father. Women were not obliged to attend the feast, but they often went with their husbands.—*The feast of the passover.* Also called the feast of unleavened bread, the chief Jewish festival which began on the 14th of Nisan (April).—*When he was twelve years old.* At twelve, according to Jewish custom, he would be called "a son of the Law," when its obligations would be binding upon him.—*They went up after the custom of the feast.* According to the Law, every Israelite must celebrate at Jerusalem the three great festivals of the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.—*Fulfilled the days.* The feast lasted seven days, but they could leave after two days.

46-48. *After three days.* The first day was the day they missed him; the second, the day of the return; the third, the day of the successful search.—*Doctors.* Rabbis or scribes.—*Teachers.* Or, *doctors.* See Lk. 5.17; Acts 5.34, RVm.—*They.* His parents.—*Son.* Greek, *Child,* RVm.

49-52. *How is it that ye sought me?* Words of surprise, not rebuke.—*Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?* This question may indicate only a devout Jewish boy's interest in the temple, but we may also see in it the Boy's sense of his divine Sonship.—*In my Father's house.* Or, *about my Father's business:* Greek, *in the things of my Father,* RVm. In the Greek ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου, literally, *in the* (plural) *of my Father,* there is no noun expressed with the definite article τοῖς, and the meaning may be either *in the house of* or *in the affairs* (business) *of,* but as "How is it that ye sought me?" expresses surprise that his parents did not know where to find him, it is more probable that the reference is to the house or temple. His relation to his divine Father and his work he comprehended.—*They understood not.* Evidently Luke's authority here is Mary.—*Nazareth.* Where he remained for eighteen years.—*Was subject unto them.* Obeyed them. As Joseph is not again mentioned, it is inferred that he died soon afterwards.—*Advanced.* The Greek word προέκοπτε means literally *he cut his way forward.*—*Stature.* Or, *age,* RVm. —*Favor.* Or, *grace,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

42. *And when he was twelve years old.* Christianity is the only religion that makes anything of the childhood of its Founder. The other religions of the world either have nothing to say about the childhood of their founders, or preserve only a few insignificant traditions. Tradition says that Lao-tse, the founder of Taoism, was born as an old man. And Christianity is the only religion that takes any particular account of children themselves. The Gospels are full of stories of Jesus' miracles in behalf of children, and of his love and tenderness toward children. The other religions are concerned only with adults. Their message is a message for adults. *Dr. Robert E. Speer.*

46. *Sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.*

"I'm looking for my boy Sam," remarked an inventor at the Chicago World's Fair.

"Where shall we look? Midway?" was asked.

"No, I'll try the Electricity Building. That boy of mine thinks electricity, reads electricity, and talks electricity; and though he is only thirteen he understands electricity far better than I do."

It was in the upper room of the Electricity Building that Sam was finally found. "And when they saw him, they were astonished," described accurately the feeling of the searchers. Literally, the boy appeared sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions. For there, among a group of thoughtful-faced men, was the lad of our search, leaning forward, his whole face alight and alive as he listened to the discussion in progress. *Zilah Foster Stevens,* in *Sunday School Times.*

48. *Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?* It is evident that at this time Jesus became aware of a call, which they were unable to hear but he felt he could not disregard. In all homes there comes a date differing, indeed, in different cases and seldom clearly marked in the calendar, at which the authority of parents has to relax its hold and the children take their destiny into their own hands; but parents sometimes do not submit with grace to this inevitable change, attempting to exercise their right too long, while children, on the other hand, to their own peril, may grasp at emancipation too soon. In the case of a character as original as Jesus, it was inevitable that the yoke should be slipped and that he should brook no interference with the plan of his life, after it had been clearly formulated in his own mind. But this was not understood by her to whom according to the flesh he appertained. *James Stalker,* in *The Ethic of Jesus.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

42. *When he was twelve years old.* Pious Israelites were careful to accustom children, from the earliest years, to the requirements of their religion, and hence often brought them with them to Jerusalem at the great feasts. Indeed, even the liberal school of Hillel made it binding to do so as soon as the child

was able with the help of its father's hand, to climb the flight of steps into the temple courts. *Dr. Geikie.*

44. *Supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey.* They knew that they could trust him, and it is not surprising that they supposed him with "his kinsfolk and acquaintance," for they travelled in a caravan made up of a considerable company, from Nazareth and near-by towns, the boys and young men probably walking together in groups, the older ones by themselves, many of whom were riding mules. "I question," says Dr. Thompson, "whether there is ever a pilgrimage made from Jerusalem to the Jordan at the present day without the separation of children and parents equally prolonged."

46. *They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions.* There were rooms off from the temple courts where the teachers, famous "Doctors of the Law" were wont to meet their pupils, expound the law, and answer questions. A large part of the rabbinical books are said to consist of answers given by rabbis to their pupils' questions.

48. *Thy father.* The Syrian plough, ridiculous as it looks, has the deepest interest for me, on account of a tradition which tells us that articles such as these were made in Joseph's workshop. Some of the early disciples were asked if they had not preserved some article of their Master's handiwork, and they replied: "No; Joseph made only plough-handles, and these perish very quickly." *Agnes Smith Lewis,* in *A Holiday Tour in Moab and Gilead.*

51. *And he went down with them and came to Nazareth.* The traveler who has followed any of the children of Nazareth—as I have done—to their simple homes, and seen the scanty furniture, the plain but sweet and wholesome food, the uneventful, happy, patriarchal life, may form a vivid conception of the manner in which Jesus lived. Nothing can be plainer than those houses, with the doves sunning themselves on the white roofs, and the vines wreathed about them.

The mats, or carpets, are laid loose along the walls; shoes and sandals are taken off at the threshold; from the center hangs a lamp which forms the only ornament of the room; in some recess in the wall is placed the wooden chest, painted with bright colors, which contains the books or other possessions of the family; on a ledge that runs around the wall, within easy reach, are neatly rolled up the gay-coloured quilts, which serve as beds, and on the same ledge are ranged the earthen vessels for daily use; near the door stand the large common water-jars of red clay with a few twigs and green leaves—often of aromatic shrubs—thrust into their orifices to keep the water cool. At meal-time a painted wooden stool is placed in the center of the apartment, a large tray is put upon it, and in the middle of the tray stands the dish of rice and meat, or *libban,* or stewed fruits, from which all help themselves in common. Both before and after the meal the servant, or the youngest member of the family, pours water over the hands from a brazen ewer into a brazen bowl. So quiet, so simple, so humble, so uneventful was the outward life of the family at Nazareth. *F. W. Farrar.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Herod found that the Wise-men had returned home without reporting to him the finding of the young "King of the Jews," he was very angry, and ordered the slaying of all the children two years old and under in and near Bethlehem. But the Babe and his mother had already been taken to Egypt by Joseph, for God had warned him in a dream that Herod would seek the Child's life. How long the Holy Family stayed in Egypt is uncertain; after Herod's death they returned and settled in Nazareth. The only event of the childhood of Jesus, recorded by Luke, forms the subject of this lesson. The date is April, A. D. 9.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Nazareth, which was the home of Jesus until at the age of thirty he began his public ministry, is in Lower Galilee, just above the Plain of Esdraelon and midway between the Mediterranean and the Sea of Galilee. The village is en-

circled by hills. From the summit of the southern hill there is a beautiful view of the Plain of Esdraelon on the south, whence lead the roads to Jerusalem and Egypt; of Tabor and the Valley of the Jordan on the east, and beyond, the mountains of Gilead; and of the ridge of Carmel and the Mediterranean, or Great Sea, on the west; from the northern hill are seen the mountains of Galilee rising one above the other with snowy Hermon towering above them all, while round its foot winds the road from Damascus. It was usually a four days' journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, a distance of eighty miles—but probably the caravan with which Joseph and Mary travelled would not go more than six or eight miles the first day.

Assign paragraphs 162-164 and 17-18 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Tell your pupils how the Babe's life was saved, showing Hofmann's picture of the Flight into Egypt (Perry 797E, Brown 811) or Plockhorst's (Perry 814, Brown 1068, Wilde 27). Then describe his life in the Nazareth home, using Farrar's account, page 78, and first Topic. Itterbach's beautiful picture of the Christ-child (Brown 1441) will aid your vivid description.

There is a fine picture by Sir John Millais entitled "Christ in the House of His Parents," which can not be obtained in a cheap reproduction, but you can give the word picture: The Boy Jesus has cut his hand and has gone to his mother for help. Mary kneels before him and he is kissing away her fear. Joseph has stopped his work at his carpenter's bench to look with loving care at the young Boy, and St. John is bringing a basin of water to bathe the cut finger. Shavings lie about the floor, and through the open door sheep and lambs are feeding in the sunshine.

As you discuss the incident of the lesson give each pupil a penny picture of Christ in the Temple by Hofmann (Perry 797 G; Soule, 7382, costs fifteen cents). Talk about the picture, pointing out the roll in the hand of the man on the left, and tell them that the Jews wrote their books on such rolls. That man has his hand over his mouth; evidently he has been surprised by something the young Boy has said and doesn't want the others to know it, so he tries to partly hide his face that they may not see what he is thinking. The aged man leaning on his staff and his companion are eagerly listening to the young Boy, and the man in the chair with the volume on his knees, one leaf partly turned, has been saying what he believes the Scriptures say. Then talk about the beautiful face of the divine Boy, the center of the group, whose hand points to the book as though he were eagerly saying, "It is written on those very pages." Tell the story of the man who went so often to see this great picture, page 80.

Close with the thought of the divine Boy's beautiful life of obedience to his parents in the Nazareth home. Show Tissot's pictures: Jesus and his mother at the fountain, No. 8; Youth of Jesus, No. 11.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When you hear about Benjamin West, the great artist, you like to hear how, when a boy, he made his paint-brushes from hair taken from his cat's tail, and his paint from the juice squeezed out of poke-berries; when you hear about Robert Fulton, who built the first good steamboat, you like to hear how the boy tired of poling a flatboat out to the fishing-ground, and made a paddle-wheel that could be turned with a crank, so that he could use it instead of having to pole the boat; when you hear about Louisa Alcott, the writer, you like to hear how she wrote verses when a child, and turned the old fairy tales into plays which she and her sisters played in the barn.

What would we not give could we know all about the childhood and youth of Jesus, could we see him as he lived in his home at Nazareth, watch him at Joseph's carpenter's bench and hear him as he talked with his mother and friends and playmates! Only one event of all his youth is recorded, and that by Luke alone—the subject of our lesson to-day. But before talking about that, let us try to see his home at Nazareth as Dean Farrar has pictured it.

For Older Pupils. Tell your pupils that however familiar one is with this

lesson, one never tires of thinking about it just as one never tires of Hofmann's famous painting of the scene in the temple. As you tell the following story (told by Dr. Robert E. Speer in "The Master of the Heart") pass around penny reproductions of the familiar painting, which will bear oft-repeated study.

I went one Sunday afternoon in New York City, not long ago, to a religious meeting, where a man was talking to men about Hofmann's pictures of our Lord. He had an excellent collection of them in stereopticon slides which he was showing to this crowd of men. He reserved until the last Hofmann's picture of Jesus as a lad talking with the doctors in the temple. As he threw the picture on the screen, a beautifully colored picture, he told the story of how he came to be in possession of his copy of it. He had gone to visit Hofmann, immediately after the completion of that painting, and Hofmann gave him the first copy. He brought that copy home and put it in his business office in New York City. One day, as he was sitting there, a judge from the Supreme Court of one of the New England States came in to consult him about some business. He saw the picture standing on the easel. Instantly his eyes were attracted to it. He looked at it all the time he was discussing his business, and after the business was over he sat a little while still looking at the picture, and then went away. Later in the morning he came back and said, "I want to see that Boy again." He was invited to sit down, and he sat down and gazed at that face, at those great open eyes, at that look of purity, which speaks of such hope and strength for men. He sat for nearly an hour looking at it, and then got up, his eyes very moist, and walked away. In the afternoon he came back and said, "I would like to see the picture of the Boy once more." The owner gave it to him, and said, "Go into my private office, sit down and look at it as long as you want to." He took the picture and went into the office and laid it down in his lap and cried over it. An hour passed, and then he came out and laid the picture down, and with the tears running down his cheeks he said, "The Boy has conquered me." And he went out from the room with the picture of that Boy lingering in his life and transforming it. He is living now, said the speaker, in his own State, an influential Christian man, teaching scores of young men in his Bible class of him unto whom he had looked away and by whom he had been changed.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Ideal Childhood

The Ideal Youth. In this glimpse of the twelve-year-old Lad, I see how real a Boy Jesus was, and I gain a vivid sense of kinship with him, for as Browning puts it, I see

> A face like my face...a man like to me,
> ...a hand like this hand,

living and working in that Nazareth home.

It was a real Child who joined other boys in their sports, a real Boy who studied Law and the Prophets, a real Son who was obedient to his parents, a real Youth, who helped his father Joseph in his work as a carpenter.

The Gospels do not describe his early life, but some things we know from his later words, and others we can picture from our knowledge of the life and customs of his day.

We know from his later words that as a Boy he had played games with other children:—To what are the men of this generation like? They are like unto children that sit in the market-place and call one to another; who say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not weep (Lk. 7.31, 32): that he had watched the flowers—Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin, yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Lk. 12.27): and the birds—Some seed fell by the wayside and the birds of the heaven devoured it (Lk. 8.5): and the chickens—O Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (Mt. 23.37): and the foxes—the foxes have holes and the

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THE BOY JESUS FOUND IN THE TEMPLE

birds of the heaven have nests (Lk. 9.58):—and the farmer—the parable of the sower: and the shepherd—the parable of the sheep: and the vine-dresser—Every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away (Jn. 15.2): and he had learned to tell the weather signs—When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the heaven is red and lowering (Mt. 16.2): and he had studied human nature—He knew all men (Jn. 2.24).

We know from his remarkable use of the Scriptures that he was a diligent student of the Old Testament in his youth. His quotations show also that he read it in the original Hebrew, and not in the Greek translation which was then in general use. Josephus writing of those days, says: "We devote the greatest pains to the education of children, and to make the observance of the Law and the rules of piety which have been given us the most important business of our lives," and Philo tells us that the Jews were well instructed in the Law from their earliest youth.

An interesting account of the early education given every Jewish boy, such as Jesus must have received, is given by Dr. Edersheim. A religious atmosphere surrounded a child of Jewish parents. As soon as he learned to speak his religious instruction began,—no doubt with such verses of Holy Script as composed that part of the Jewish Liturgy which answers to our Creed. Then would follow other passages from the Bible, short prayers, and select sayings of the sages. Special attention was paid to the culture of the memory, since forgetfulness might prove as fatal in its consequences as ignorance or neglect of the Law. Very early the child must have been taught what might be called his birthday-text, some verse of Scripture beginning, or ending with, or at least containing, the same letters as his Hebrew name. This guardian-promise the child would insert in his daily prayers. The earliest hymns taught would be the Psalms for the days of the week, or festive Psalms such as those connected with the festive pilgrimages to Zion. At five or six years of age the boy formed one of a semi-circle of pupils about the teacher at school in the synagogue. All either stood or sat on the ground. Until ten years old the Scriptures were his only text book: from ten to fifteen he studied traditional law: then followed theological discussions. The Nazareth home was probably too poor to possess its own Sacred Volume or Rolls, and it was in the Synagogue that Jesus pored over them.

Childhood may Perfect be. Did you ever think that nine-tenths of the life of Jesus on earth—thirty years out of the thirty-three—were spent in that humble home in preparation for the one-tenth of active public service? During that time he was growing, developing, gathering knowledge and experience for the great task awaiting him.

"Lying at the feet of childhood are blossoms of virtue and achievement." Not buds, but blossoms. We think of childhood as in training for manhood and womanhood, with Charles Dudley Warner we say that it is a great privilege to be young, that all the world is before a youth, and he can make it for himself substantially what he will. But there is this other truth also, that childhood itself may perfect be. We see Jesus at twelve years of age dutiful and godly, eager and patient, keenly sensible of his great mission, yet content to abide God's appointed time in his humble home. How true are Dr. Van Dyke's words—

> Could every time-worn heart but see thee once again
> A happy human Child, among the homes of men,
> The age of doubt would pass—the visions of thy face
> Would silently restore the childhood of the race.

Subject to his Parents. And he went down with them, says Luke, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them. In these early years of preparation, he was subject, obedient, to his parents. Charles Reade says of one of his characters that he never spoke of his mother but paid her a small allowance with the regularity and affectionate grace of clockwork! Jesus' affectionate care for his mother is seen at the Crucifixion, when one of the "Seven Words" was for her. As a Boy, tender affection, willing obedience, self-forgetful humility, must have marked his Nazareth life.

It is said that fifty years ago the first lesson taught an American child was

obedience; has obedience become a lost virtue to-day? There is a school in New York where boys from homes of the poor are taught various things to fit them for office boys, but chief of all lessons is that of obedience. As an officer says, "The first thing we instill into a boy's mind is the understanding that he must do exactly as he is told."

A boy from a good home entered a business house as office boy. Late in the day his employer asked him why he had not done what he had been told to do early in the morning. "Oh, I didn't feel like doing it," the boy replied. It was the answer he was accustomed to give at home, and he spoke without any thought of being impudent. His employer promptly knocked him down and the boy went home, not to complain of the treatment received from his employer, but of the treatment received from his parents, because they had never taught him to obey.

II Ideal Growth

How Jesus Grew. Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. God might have sent his Son full grown into the world but he chose rather to send him as a helpless Babe to attain a perfect Manhood through all the natural stages of human growth, physical, mental and spiritual. He was larger and wiser at twelve than at two, at thirty than at twelve; he had a glimpse of his high calling at twelve which he did not have at two, a realization at thirty which he did not have at twelve.

Growth in Stature. Are there marks on some door in your house which show how tall you are now, how tall you were a year ago, two years ago? Are you glad when you stand up to be measured and find that you are considerably taller than you were at the last measurement? Emerson was once traveling across the continent. He was weighed at Cheyenne and a fellow traveller asked the result. "A hundred and forty and a half," replied Emerson; "and that half I prize; it is an index of better things."

Growth in Wisdom. There is, it is believed, among the old records of the town of Boston, an order to this effect, that a given road be constructed as far as Newton, but no farther, for the reason that it was extremely unlikely that a highway back into the wilderness beyond that point would ever be needed! The Pilgrims and Puritans had as good a right to think that they had brought under cultivation all the available land within the boundaries of what is now the United States, as most educated persons have for supposing that their total intellectual capacity is engaged in the conduct of life. As the strip of land on the Atlantic seaboard occupied by the colonies was to the mighty continent beyond it, so is the brain power under actual development, even among educated persons, to the total brain capacity. *G. A. Gordon.*

Growth in Favor with God and Man. A book has recently been published containing the letters of a great Englishman, William E. Gladstone, and among them is this one written to his seven-year-old son:

You are now a little more than seven years old, and are more able to think on what you are, and on what you do, than when you were a very little child. You must therefore try to render a more strict account to God; must pray for more and more of his grace; and must try harder to be like the Lord Jesus Christ, and to love him with all your heart.

How to grow Spiritually. Professor Drummond well says that to try to make a thing grow is as absurd as to help the tide to come in or the sun to rise. No one would think of telling a boy to grow physically. He grows without trying. One or two simple conditions are fulfilled by habit, without thought, and the growth goes on, the result follows by nature.

Equally true is this of growth in grace; one need only fulfil the conditions, and give himself no concern about the result.

What are one or two of the conditions? First is prayer. Prayer is to the spirit what food is to the body, it brings to the spiritual nature strength from the Infinite Nature. Second is service. Service is to the spirit what exercise is to the body; it is the active side of spiritual development, transforming into deeds the divine energy received through prayer. Fulfil these conditions and favor with God and man will result.

Dr. Hillis has graphically told the process by which Dwight L. Moody grew

in favor with God and men. "Mr. Moody was a widow's son. He was unschooled when he went to Boston to begin his career at seventeen, was refused entrance to the church because he did not understand what was involved; after six months was received; went to Chicago at eighteen; was refused a class in the Sunday-school because he could not read well; finally obtained permission to form a class of his own; the next Sunday morning, came in triumphant, followed by eighteen ragamuffins; rented a room on the North side; when he could not speak for himself, committed the Bible to memory and recited it in prayer-meeting, for he was determined to speak; since he had no information of his own to give to the boys, read from the writings of others; learned to pray by praying; learned to speak by speaking; learned to meet men by meeting them; and finally became one of the greatest forces for good in the nineteenth century. What has been done, can be done. This law of growth by exercise is for all."

Arrested Growth. We do not grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And so we grow old in years, but we are wearing the mental and spiritual garments of childhood. If I may write it reverently we must appear as pathetically grotesque to those "who look with other eyes than ours," as a full grown man would look to us if he were wearing the hats of a little child. Our conceptions of the Lord are no bigger than they were when first we met him. Our sympathies are no richer, no more comprehensive. Our prayers have not increased in grasp and range. We are "just where we were." We are pitiable specimens of "arrested growth." *Dr. J. H. Jowett,* in *The High Calling.*

III Ideal Aim

I must be in my Father's House. As explained on page 77, this is probably the truer reading rather than "about my Father's business," as the more familiar version reads. But in either case, the thought of the Christ-lad was that he must be obedient to his Father's will, whether by tarrying in his Father's temple or by busying himself with his Father's affairs. In the words of Dr. Edersheim: So far as we can judge, it was there and then that, for the first time, he felt the strong and irresistible impulse—that divine necessity of his being—to be "about his Father's business." We all, when first awakening to spiritual consciousness—or, perhaps, when for the first time taking part in the feast of the Lord's house—may, and, learning from his example, should, make this the hour of decision, in which heart and life shall be wholly consecrated to the one business of our Father. But there was far more than this in the bearing of Jesus on this occasion. That forgetfulness of his Child-life was a sacrifice—a sacrifice of self; that entire absorption in his Father's business, without a thought of self, in the gratification of curiosity, the acquisition of knowledge, or personal ambition—a consecration of himself unto God. It was the first manifestation of his passive and active obedience to the will of God. Even at this stage, it was the forth-bursting of the inmost meaning of his life: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." And yet this awakening of the Christ-consciousness on his first visit to the Temple, partial, and perhaps even temporary, as it may have been, seems itself like the morning-dawn, which from the pinnacle of the temple the priest watched, ere he summoned his waiting brethren beneath to offer the early sacrifice.

I must be in my Father's House. That must, first mentioned at this time, dominated his whole life. The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts, and the ideals that youth hold determine the after-lives that youth lead. This *must* of Jesus shows that at twelve he had risen far above the majority of men who drift on through life purposeless. It was the one aim of his life to do his Father's will, to fulfill his God-appointed work. To many a mere child there comes a consciousness of what the meaning and end of his life may be. And well it is for the one who early learns that every life has a must—a duty—that at the close of his life he may be able to say of it—God's gift—"It is finished."

A Must for Everyone. God is a kind Father. He sets us all in the places where he wishes us to be employed; and that employment is truly "our Fa-

ther's business." He chooses work for every creature which will be delightful to them, if they do it simply and humbly. He gives us always strength enough, and sense enough, for what he wants us to do; if we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves, it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing him, if we are not happy ourselves. *John Ruskin.*

Aimless and Worthless Lives. Dr. Washington Gladden refers to one of the saddest, most depressing pictures he ever saw painted by the pen, found in a novel which pictures the life of the rich young Londoner. He finds in it life so empty, so trivial, so utterly devoid of purpose, so absorbed with inanities, as to make the lives of the people in the slums appear the more hopeful. And then the labor and weariness of that kind of life—the multitudinous engagements, the exacting demands, the burdens of it all!

"I tell you," says one of these devotees of fashion, "it's just like working in mosaic—so many little bits to fit in. I don't think our set ever gets a chance in life."

"Always slaving," comments a friend; "that's it. Sometimes I wish I were a 'bloke' with four bank holidays a year, and there an end. And yet we are called the idle rich!"

"Idle rich! where would the poor be if we struck for a quiet life? I work ten hours a day inventing wants for myself, and work for them, and very often eight hours overtime."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Jesus sanctified childhood by passing through it. *Irenœus.*

I say that man is made to grow, not stop. *Browning.*

It is not a sign of being in the grace of God when one is out of favor with men. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Seeking wisdom when you are old is like writing on water; seeking it when you are young is like graving on stone. *Oriental Proverb.*

The granary must be filled before the poor are fed; knowledge must be gained before knowledge is given. *Plato.*

Some one has said, "Boys will be boys": he was an abler diagnostician of life who said, "Boys will be men." *James I. Vance.*

Success is growing to your full spiritual stature under God's sky. *Carlyle.*

Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord. Col. 3.20.

And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. Isa. 11.2.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

From his earliest years Jesus knew how to obey. To him as to all, obedience was the pathway to power.

As there are conditions which must be met to attain growth in stature and wisdom, so there are to attain favor with God and man. Let us pay diligent heed throughout the year to the life and teachings of Jesus the Christ, that we may learn the conditions and how to fulfill them.

Gipsy Smith has a sermon based upon the forty-fourth and forty-fifth verses of our lesson and entitled the Lost Christ. Among his questions are these: Have you lost Christ? Is he as real, is he as dear to you as when you first set out for the kingdom? Mary lost Christ because she supposed he was in the company; have you been living as Mary was living that day, supposing?

Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock gives as the poet's word to-day:

O that I may grow!
What though Time cuts his furrows in my face
My heart may ever add grace unto grace,
Graces with added days still keeping pace.
O that I may grow!

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him, is the first verse. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man, is the last verse. Jesus grew physically, mentally, and spiritually; he had a gradual development until he attained a perfect Manhood.

The one incident recorded between these two verses is all that we know about his childhood. When twelve years of age he went with his parents to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the passover. His parents started homeward, but he tarried in Jerusalem. They missed him at the end of the day's journey, and failing to find him with their large company with whom they were journeying, they returned and searched for him. The third day they found him sitting in the temple with the learned rabbis, listening to them and asking questions which showed such understanding that all were amazed. His parents, too, were astonished and to his mother's troubled rebuke—Why have you treated us in this way? Your father and I have sought you sorrowing—he gave an answer that she could not understand: Why did you seek me, did you not know that I must be in my Father's house? It may be that Jesus then first realized that he was different from those with whom he lived. It may be that the first sight of Jerusalem and the temple, the religious observance of the feast, and the questions and answers of the rabbis, caused the real meaning of his life and mission to dawn upon his mind. Whatever his thoughts, he remained the true, obedient, sinless Youth, and returning with his parents to Nazareth was "subject unto them."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The child's relation to the church.
2. Mary, a type, as Phillips Brooks says, of people who, intrusted with any great and sacred interest identify their own lives with that interest and care for it conscientiously, but who, when the interest begins to manifest its own vitality and to shape its own methods, are filled with perplexity.
3. The boyhood of Jesus. See "The Master Builder," *The Outlook,* June 17, 1911.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Into what provinces was the kingdom of Herod the Great divided on his death? Who was the ruler of each and what was his title? At the time of the public ministry of the Baptist and of Jesus, who was ruling in each province? (Clipping, page 24.) 2. What were the great religious parties at this time, and for what did each stand? (Biblical Cyclopedias.) 3. Who were the scribes? 4. Who were John's parents? (2d lesson.) 5. Where did he prepare for his life work? (Lk. 1.80.) 6. How was John dressed and what was his food while in the wilderness? (Mt. 3.4.) 7. What was his mission? (Jn. 1.6-8.) 8. Where in the Book of Isaiah is the quotation found? 9. What parable did Jesus give that is recalled by verse 9? (Lk. 13.7.) 10. Explain verse 17. (Clipping, p. 87.) 11. When and under whom did Palestine become a part of Syria? (Clipping, p. 19.) 12. How did the Jews regard Antiochus the Great? Clipping, p. 19.)

Questions to think about. 1. In what respects were the youth and early manhood of Jesus and John the Baptist alike? 2. In what different? 3. John the Baptist resembles a prophet whose life we studied last year; who was he, and in what respects were the two alike? 4. What qualities do you admire in the Baptist? 5. Which took the greater "grit," to tell the Pharisees their faults or to live on locusts and wild honey and wear camel's hair? 6. What does the word "repent" mean? 7. Is that one always repentant who is sorry for his sin? 8. What evidences of repentance did John require? 9. What evidences of repentance must our lives show? 10. How many figures of speech can you find in this lesson? What is the meaning of each? 11. Whose duty was it to remove sandals? (Clipping, page 89.) 12. Describe the oriental method of threshing. (Clipping, p. 89.)

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON VII—FEBRUARY 18

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Golden Text

Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Mt. 3.2

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 3.1-20. **The Ministry of** John the Baptist. **T.** John 1.19-28. John's Disclaimer. **W.** Isa. 1.10-20. Preaching Repentance. **T.** John 3.25-36. John's Humility. **F.** Matt. 3.1-12. John's Preaching. **S.** Matt. 11.7-15. Christ's Testimony Concerning John. **S.** 2 Kings 1.1-8. John's Pattern. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 1.18; Luke 3.1-20 READ Mt. 3.1-12 COMMIT vv 8, 9 or 16, 17

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituræa and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
Make his paths straight.
5 Every valley shall be filled,
And every mountain and hill shall be brought low;
And the crooked shall become straight,
And the rough ways smooth;
6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 9 And even now the axe also lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 10 And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do? 11 And he answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise. 12 And there came also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher, what must we do? 13 And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is appointed you. 14 And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse *any one* wrongfully; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ; 16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and *in* fire: 17 whose fan is in his hand, thoroughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar.* Augustus, the first Cæsar of the Roman Empire, died in 14 A. D., but three years earlier Tiberius was associated with him and had equal authority in the government of the provinces and of the armies, hence the fifteenth year is reckoned from 11 A. D., making the date 26 A. D.—*Judæa, Galilee, Ituræa, Trachonitis, Abilene.* See the Geographical Background.—*Philip the tetrarch.* He was very different from his father, Herod the Great, and his brothers; Josephus says of him: He was moderate, and peaceful in his rule, and spent his whole life in his country. He went out with only a small retinue, always taking with him the throne on which he might sit and judge. Whenever he met any one who had need of him, he made no delay, but sat down the throne wherever he might be, and heard the case.—*Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene.* Supposed to have been the grandson of the Tetrarch Lysanias who was put to death by Mark Antony in 36 B. C.—*In the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas.* Annas was high priest from 7 to 14 A. D. but retained his title afterwards and was regarded by the Jews as still the lawful high priest. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas, who was appointed high priest by Pilate's predecessor and held office till 37 A. D.—*The word of God came unto John.* Compare the call of Isaiah, Isa. 6.8, which we studied last year.—*In the wilderness.* Of Judæa.

3-6. *Preaching.* Proclaiming.—*The baptism of repentance.* "Baptism is an act of profession, and is related to repentance as the declaration of forgiveness is to forgiveness" (*Gould*).—*The words of Isaiah.* Isa. 40.3-5.

7-8. *Ye offspring of vipers.* Vipers, or serpents, were considered emblems of deceitfulness and wickedness.—*Who warned you?* Who thought it worth while to warn you? The Pharisees thought themselves so righteous they should not have feared the judgment, nor should the Sadducees since they professed to disbelieve in it. Jesus applied this phrase to the scribes and Pharisees, Mt. 12.34; 23.33.—*To flee from the wrath to come.* As vipers in the fields flee before the flames when the stubble is set on fire. "The wrath to come" refers to the Day of Judgment; compare Mal. 3.2; 4.5.—*Therefore.* If you would escape the wrath.—*Fruits.* Works.—*Worthy of repentance.* Which will prove the sincerity of your repentance.—*Within yourselves.* In your hearts.—*We have Abraham to our father.* Compare Jesus' words in Jn. 8.39. Jews believed that they all would be saved because they were descendants of Abraham. "The Jewish boast; the Jewish error" (*Schaff*). "The fire of hell (*Gehenna*) has no power to consume even the sinners of Israel, say the rabbis, but they go down only to be frightened and slightly singed for their bad actions. Then comes Abraham, who kept all the precepts of the Law, and through his own merit brings them up again" (*Dummelow*).—*To raise up children unto Abraham.* In their stead others could be made by God the heirs of the promise given to Abraham. See Gal. 3.7; Rom. 4.16.

9-14. *Even now the axe also lieth at the root of the trees.* This figure of speech forcibly shows how near John thought the divine judgment to be. Compare Jn. 15.2-6. Fruit-trees were all taxed, and so a tree that did not yield fruit was quickly cut down.—*Publicans.* That is, collectors or renters of Roman taxes, RVm.—*Extort no more than that which is appointed you.* The tax gatherers were accustomed to collect more than the legal tax and to keep the amount over.—*Soldiers.* Greek, soldiers on service, RVm.

15-17. *Haply.* Perhaps.—*There cometh he.* In the Talmud the Christ is spoken of as *Habba,* the Coming One.—*Latchet.* Thong or lace.—*Worthy.* Greek, *sufficient.* See page 89.—*In.* Or, *with,* RVm.—*In the Holy Spirit and in fire.* John says, in effect: I can bring you to repentance, but no further. My baptism gives no grace. It only symbolises the greater baptism which Jesus will give. His baptism will give you "the Holy Spirit," *i. e.* new spiritual life, and inward sanctification, and "Fire," *i. e.* holy fervor and zeal in God's service. Compare Acts 2.3 (*Dummelow.*)—*Fann.* The winnowing fan threw up the wheat and chaff together; the wind then blew away the chaff, while the wheat fell in a heap. See Ps. 1.4.—*Garner.* Granary, or storehouse. The Greek ἀποθήκη (whence comes our word apothecary) means literally *a place for putting away.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.* John baptized with water; the Messiah with fire. The superficiality of the work of the one is thus indicated, the depth and thoroughness of the work of the other. Water cleanses the skin; fire burns its way through the whole fabric, seizes upon every particle, refining, transfiguring each and every faculty and affection. John's work was skin deep; Messiah's grace is deep as the soul. Christ converted John's water into steam.

How far do I apprehend this deep energising faith? Has this fire of God fallen upon me, consuming my sins, illuminating my mind in the deep things of the Spirit, refining all my powers and passions, vitalising my whole being and doing? Let me not stay with a formal religion which is only a painted fire; let me covet earnestly the vital spark, the quickening beam, the purging fire. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *the Quiet Hour.*

16. *And in fire.* The Spirit as fire shows us just where we are. I always thought the cupola on the City Hall in Brooklyn was made of stone until there was a fire, and then I discovered it was made of wood. We often have great ideas about ourselves until we let the Holy Spirit test us, and then we know just where we stand. The fire of the Spirit! This is no fiction! This is not something unrelated to life. There is nothing so practical as this in all the world. *John Douglas Adam, Address.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

4. *The voice of one crying in the wilderness.* The thought here of Isaiah was that God was returning at the head of the Hebrew exiles from Babylon, and a herald must precede to clear the way. Dr. Hugh Macmillan gives his experience with a herald in Cairo: More than once I had to make way for a man clad in large white tunic gathered round his waist by a bright red scarf, and over it a velvet jacket embroidered with gold lace. His legs and feet were bare, and he carried in his hand a long stick. This was the *sais,* or groom, whose office was to run on foot at some distance in front of his master's carriage, and to clear the way before it.

4, 5. Roads in the East were originally built by a king's order, and they were repaired whenever the king was to ride over them. Stones were removed, hills leveled, valleys filled up, and streams bridged in building a straight road for a king. From the Talmud it has been learned that a new order was issued each year at the beginning of the month Adar for the inspection and repairing of the roads leading to Jerusalem. When it was known that the present Emperor of Germany purposed visiting Palestine there was a great repairing of roads throughout Palestine and Syria.

7. *Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee?* Throughout the summer prairie and forest fires are not uncommon. The grass and thistles of the desert will blaze for miles, driving the scorpions and vipers from their holes, as John the Baptist describes in one of his vivid figures. *George Adam Smith, Geography.*

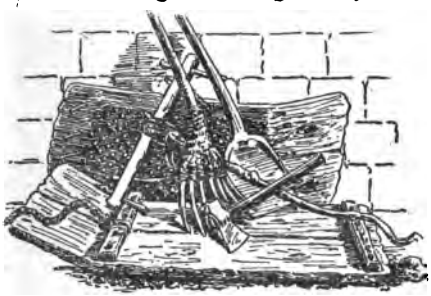
13. *Extort no more than that which is appointed you.* In Palestine to-day, writes a native of that land, the local agents or publicans have authority to assess taxes on lands, and tithes on produce and live stock, and at the same time to exact their own remuneration which sometimes amounts to a hundred per cent.

14. *Be content with your wages.* Herod's forces were recruited from many nations, among them even Thracians, Germans and Gauls, and he paid them liberally; not otherwise could he have carried out his many enterprises, garrisoned his fortresses, or kept himself secure when in Jerusalem. Of all such enlistments a number, of course, had little to do with the city economically, yet the native rulers would always have a garrison there, and when in residence their own guards. These mercenaries were paid partly in rations, partly by distribution of the booty, and partly in money. *George Adam Smith,* in *Jerusalem.*

16. *The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.* Like other orientals, Jesus wore sandals which were merely leather soles fastened to the

feet by means of leather thongs. On entering a house one had his sandals taken off and his feet dusted by a servant. This was considered the most menial of all services, and the rabbis said: Every service which a servant will perform for his master, a disciple will do for his rabbi, except loosing his sandal thong. Similar sandals are worn to-day by the people of the remote villages of Syria and by peasants of Greece, Italy and Spain.

17. *Fan...threshing-floor.* The threshing-floor was a circular space in the field beaten hard or else paved, surrounded by a row of stones. The process of threshing and winnowing is described by Dr. George M. Mackie, Missionary at Beyrout, in "Bible Manners and Customs": Sheaves are unbound and sprinkled over it, till the straw lies about a foot deep. The simplest mode of threshing is to drive cattle and donkeys over the dry straw, but the contrivance of the threshing-board is generally resorted to. This consists of thick planks nailed together, making an oblong of five by four feet, having lumps of rough basaltic rock let into the under-surface of the boards. (The upper and lower surfaces are shown in our cut.) A pair of oxen are yoked to it, and a man stands upon it, goad in hand, and drives the oxen round from morning till evening. These are the oxen that must not be muzled, but are allowed to pick up straws as often as they wish (Dt. 25.4). The winnowing is done by the shovel and the fan. The fan is a simple wooden pitchfork. By it the compound of straw, chaff and grain is tossed in the air, the chaff flies away over the hillside, and where it accumulates at the great public threshing-floors it is burnt up. The straw is deposited a few yards off, while the grain falls at the feet of the winnower. In this pile there is still a good deal of husk and straw, and it is at this concluding stage of the winnowing that the shovel is brought into use. Among the peasantry of the present day any recommendation of a winnowing-machine is met by the remonstrance that their fathers did it in this way.



Threshing and Winnowing Instruments

Garner. Granaries to-day are cut in the rock, or excavated in the earth and cemented and the small opening covered with stones and earth. Often the grain is stored in a box built along the wall of the living room, or in clay vase-shaped vessels.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There were a faithful "few," righteous and devout, in the first quarter of the first century A. D. Among them, we have seen, Zacharias and Elisabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, who were looking for the consolation of Israel and on whom was the Holy Spirit, but for the great mass of people religion had become only an empty form. The return of Elijah, as prophesied by Malachi, was needed to arouse the people and to herald the coming of the Day of the Lord. Elijah came in John the son of the priest Zacharias (lessons I and II). In his early life John had abundant opportunity to become well acquainted with the faults of the Pharisees and with the hopes and fears of his nation. At what age he withdrew to the barren Judean hills overlooking the Dead Sea, we know not, but there he spent some time in solitude, his food locusts and wild honey, his raiment of camel's hair fastened by a leathern girdle. At the age of thirty probably, for a man seldom entered public life before that age, in the year 26, he felt impelled by divine leading to come forth and sound his trumpet calls of warning. Priest and peasant alike recognized him as a man sent from God, and all men were musing in their hearts whether or not he were the Christ, and were ready so to acclaim him if he would but say the word. From the fourth Gospel we learn that members of the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem were so disturbed over the reports that came to them about John that they appointed a special committee to go to him and secure officially his denial that he was the Christ.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

For the rulers and districts mentioned in this lesson see page 24 of the Introduction.

Abilene, of which Lysanias was tetrarch, was that district of Syria which was in the neighborhood of Abila on the north side of Mount Hermon, eighteen miles from Damascus. The region round the Jordan, where John was preaching and baptizing includes the district on both sides of the Lower Jordan.

Assign paragraphs 72-76 and 19 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Recall by questions the promise made to the aged priest Zacharias (lesson I) that he should have a son, and the joy that the little boy's coming brought (lesson II). What was the boy's name? While Jesus was growing up in Nazareth this older boy John was living with his father and mother in their home among the hills. Then he went away and lived a long time in a lonely spot where he prayed and thought about what God would have him do. As you describe his dress and food show or give pupils a copy of Tissot's John the Baptist, No. 12. Omit verses 1-6 and begin our lesson with verse 7. Show Tissot's picture, No. 14, of John talking to the people who came to hear him. Teach one thing only in this lesson: John's lesson that if one is truly sorry for something that he has done he will show it by right conduct; adapting the first topic, and illustrating it by the story of the small girl and of the small dog, page 91.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Begin by having two of your pupils recite from memory, one the part of the Priest, the other the part of John, Longfellow's poem about John the Baptist.

For Older Pupils. In our second lesson the thought emphasized was, What shall this child be? The babe whose coming had been heralded by Gabriel was himself to be the herald of the Most High, to go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways. To-day we see this herald making known his message. Queen Elizabeth's ambassador said of John Knox's preaching, "The voice of him stirred me more than five hundred trumpets." This is the impression that John the Baptist's preaching made upon the people of his day, aristocrats and peasants alike.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Proofs of Repentance

True and Spurious Repentance. The multitude were merely trying to flee from the wrath to come when they came to him and professed to be repentant, John thought, even as the vipers flee before a fire in the grass that threatens to overtake them. Their repentance looked towards punishment, not towards amendment. The only way they could prove the sincerity of their repentance was by their after-conduct, the fruits that were worthy of repentance. They might acknowledge their sins, they might even mourn because of them, and be baptized in token of their repentance, but if their subsequent lives were not changed the repentance had not been genuine. John's word to the multitude is voiced by Shakespeare in the familiar words—

> A true repentance shuns the evil itself
> More than the eternal suffering or the shame.

There is a wide difference between being penitent because one has done wrong and being penitent because one has suffered the consequences of wrong doing. A man who had stolen a pair of shoes and had been convicted some time afterwards met the lawyer who had defended him. "Squire, the taking of those shoes was the worst job I ever did," he acknowledged. So far this sounds like penitence. But the man kept on. "Yes, I didn't keep 'em only a week, and

then they put me in jail. I gave you the only horse I had to defend me; my crop was lost 'cause I couldn't see to it; and then, squire, they gave me thirty-nine lashes at last. I tell you, Squire, it was a bad speculation."

In a recent address based upon the text "Ye sorrowed unto repentance," Dr. A. T. Pierson said: Notice the difference between sorrow and repentance. Sorrow is a feeling, but it is not repentance. Repentance is not a feeling, though feeling may lead to repentance. Repentance is a principle of life, an attitude of mind—a new attitude toward God, toward sin, toward self. Feeling is not to be mistaken for repentance. There may be feeling that does not lead to repentance, and there may be repentance preceded by very little feeling. Repentance is the leaving behind, and faith is the entering in.

Which showed the Fruits of Repentance? A small girl was once shut up in a room by herself and told to stay there till she could say she was sorry for what she had done. After awhile the door was slowly opened, and the child stood on the threshold but did not speak. "What do you want to say?" questioned her mother. "Nothing, only just that I'm sorry enough to have the door left open." Was she repentant?

A small dog was once slapped and turned out of the room because he had destroyed something. He ran away very much ashamed. Then he trotted briskly off to his master's room, seized something in his mouth and brought it to the closed door. Back and forth he went many times and then lay down and waited. After awhile his master opened the door and saw the dog, looking very wistful and wagging his tail, and beside him some thirty shoes and slippers. He had been taught to bring his master's slippers to him, and he thought that a big pile of them would atone for his misconduct. Was he not trying in his way to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance?

II Proofs of Religion

Religion has to do with Life. Lord Melbourne returned one Sunday morning from church fuming with rage at the preacher to whose sermon he had listened. "He is one of those pestilential people," he railed, "who suppose that religion has to do with a man's private life."

The multitude were stirred by John's preaching and they trembled before his denunciation. What then must we do? they asked; and John told them that religion had to do with their lives, that the man who had food and raiment to spare should share with the man who lacked, that the man whose business it was to collect taxes should be honest in his business and collect only what was due, that the soldier whose business it was to keep the peace should be just and merciful and contented. What a pestilential fellow he is, no doubt they reasoned; religion consists in keeping fast days and sabbaths, in making long prayers and giving tithes, but what has it to do with our businesses, our homes, and our every-day social lives?

This is the attitude of many a so-called Christian living in the year 1912. This attitude explains why some of our millionaire philanthropists can live model lives in most respects and give generously to all good causes and yet can be unjust and unmerciful in their business transactions: they have divorced religion from business. They are like the little boy whose writing was being criticised by his mother. "Your spelling is terrible!" she exclaimed. "O well, mother, don't you see that this isn't a spelling lesson? It's a composition," the youth replied. So these men seem to think that they may spell as badly as they please when they are writing their account books.

Ruskin says that if you were to cut a square inch out of any of Turner's skies, you would find the Infinite in it. It ought to be true that if you cut an hour or a moment out of any part of your days, you would find religion in it. Christianity is not a book religion, nor a creed religion, nor a Sunday religion: it is a life religion, a deed religion, a seven days in the week religion.

Religious Conduct in Secular Affairs. That conduct is often the most religious which in subject is most secular; which concerns bills and cargoes and investments and contracts and family arrangements and literature; and which, without any express allusion to God, the soul, and eternity, secretly impregnates the whole of life with the Spirit of Christ. *Dr. Marcus Dods.*

Little Rimes of Real Religion: Yours.

A thousand cults and a thousand creeds:
Is one a rose and the rest but weeds?
Or is each one suited to meet some needs?
Is your own so great that the rest seem small?
Then keep it and live it; that's all.

Pagan or Christian, Gentile or Jew,
How else may you know that Your Own is true,
Not for him or for me, or for others, but *you!*
To live by, to die by, to stand or to fall?
How? Keep it and live it; that's all. *Edmund Vance Cooke.*

III MISSIONARY TOPIC PATHMAKERS

The Voice of One crying, Make ye Ready the Way of the Lord. John's work was an ethical revival, the introduction of a fresh moral earnestness into conduct and into religion. It was the awakening and the stimulating of religious expectation. It recalled prophetic fears and fervors. The ascetic life, the unrestrained denunciatory ardor of the man, his rough handling of their religious sophistries, his aloofness from the common life and the conventional standpoints and standards, his fearlessness before his certainty of an impending judgment, the equality of his moral demand upon prince and pauper—these and other uncommon characteristics gained for John a prophet's hearing and a prophet's influence. *Henry Burton Sharman,* in *The Biblical World.*

The Forerunner in Africa and Results. Several of the most important missions to Dark Africa came into being through the death of David Livingstone—a sign of the power of the love that gives its all. Livingstone died, in 1873, upon his knees in his hut by Lake Bangweolo, in the heart of Central Africa. His men carried his body, by a weary nine-months' march, to the coast, whence it was conveyed to England, and interred in Westminster Abbey. These events so touched the Christian Churches of England that within five years missions had been started to carry the Gospel, region by region, right across Central Africa. Livingstone, in passing away, had bequeathed to the whole Christian Church his care for benighted Africa.

The success of these missions has been wonderful. They have cost much in life and treasure, but the outlay has been repaid a thousandfold. Uganda, at the gates of which Hannington was martyred, and whose early converts passed through a baptism of blood, has now a great Christian community, with more than a thousand places of worship, including a cathedral seating four thousand persons, and with native preachers carrying the Gospel not only throughout Uganda, but into the countries around. Similar success, in its degree, has attended the work on the margin of Lake Tanganyika.

At the Congo Exhibition recently held in London, the changes brought about in thirty years were summarised on a placard affixed to an African hut. "Thirty years ago not one Protestant missionary was laboring in the Congo region—no native knew how to read or write—no Congo language had been reduced to writing—the witch-doctor held sway over the hearts and minds of the people, and cruel customs fettered them. Now there are over twenty-five thousand members of the native churches, thousands of men and women read God's Word, and there are sixteen thousand six hundred scholars—seven languages have been mastered, and more or less of God's truth has been translated into them—where missionaries have been at work the power of the witch-doctor has been broken, and superstitions and cruel customs so eradicated, that young men hear with surprise about the strange deeds of their fathers." *J. W. Ewing,* in *Missions to Backward Races.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Repentance is regret made manifest in reformation. *William George Jordan.*
An able and yet humble man is a jewel worth a kingdom. *William Penn.*
Repentance is not tears but tendency. *James I. Vance.*

Christ never looks greater than when you put a great man by his side: just as the sun appears most splendid tried against limelight. *W. L. Watkinson.*

In your business and work, if you let Christianity stop when you leave the church door, there is not much righteousness in you: nor are you any too righteous if your Christianity stops at the door of your home. *Theodore Roosevelt.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Is there not a sense, questions Dr. Watkinson, in which we, too, may be harbingers of our Lord, introducing and interpreting him to a generation unconscious of his greatness and mission? We may publish how great he is, and what great things we may expect to find in him.

One of the difficulties John met with in his work of preparing hearts to receive their Lord, was the oft-repeated assurance: We have Abraham for our father and the promise was that in his descendants all the earth is to be blest. One of the difficulties God's messengers meet with to-day is the similar stumbling-block that we bear the name of Christian, we belong to the church and partake of its sacraments. What more is needed? thought the Jews of John's day: What more is needed? seemingly think some Christians of our day. Consciousness of sin, repentance, a new life, John answered.

John the Baptist was unwilling to accept undeserved honor from others, he desired the preferment of Another rather than of himself. Could this be said of us?

What should we have to do differently if we followed John's principle of action?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The purpose of the rite of baptism.
2. The popular expectation as to the purpose and methods of the Messiah.
3. The wage problem to-day.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Read all the accounts of the temptation, Mt. 4.1-11; Mk. 1.12-13; Lk. 4.1-13. 2. Why was John reluctant to baptize Jesus? (Mt. 3.14.) 3. What was Jesus doing as he was baptized? (Lk. 3.21.) 4. What occurred as he prayed? (Lk. 3.22.) 5. Where is the scene of the temptation laid? (Clipping, page 97.) 6. From what book did Jesus quote in meeting the temptations? 7. From what book did the devil quote? 8. Read Milton's painting of the vision in Paradise Regained, III, 251. 9. What was the effect of Greek influence upon Palestine? (Clipping, p. 20.) 10. What was the origin of the parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees? (Clipping, p. 20.)

Questions to think about. 1. John's baptism was "of repentance unto the remission of sins": since Jesus was sinless, why was he baptized? (Clipping, p. 94.) 2. Why are people baptized to-day? 3. What is the connection between the baptism and the temptation? (Clipping, p. 97.) 4. What is a temptation? 5. Is there any one who is never tempted? 6. Is it a sin to have a temptation come to one? 7. Why was Jesus tempted? 8. In what two ways is Jesus' experience of temptation interpreted? (Clipping, p. 97.) 9. Which sort of temptation would have been the severer to Jesus? 10. Did Jesus meet temptations as the Son of God or as Man? 11. Jesus afterwards miraculously supplied food to feed the hungry five thousand: why would it have been wrong for him to miraculously supply food for himself when hungry? 12. What hero of our last year's lessons was fed in the wilderness in a wonderful way? 13. What is the force of Jesus' answer to the first temptation? (Read the setting of the quotation in Dt. 8.) 14. Why would it have been wrong for Jesus to cast himself down from the temple trusting to God to save him? (Clipping, p. 100.) 15. When did Peter say something to Jesus that was a temptation similar in force to the third temptation here? (Mt. 16.23.)

Note Book Work. Continue the work undertaken for the year. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON VIII—FEBRUARY 25

THE BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Golden Text

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. Heb. 2.18

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 1.9-13; Matt. 4.1-11. The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus. **T.** Matt. 3.13-17. Fulfilling all Righteousness. **W.** 2 Pet. 1.16-21. A Heavenly Voice. **T.** Deut. 6.1-19. Tempting God. **F.** Jas. 1.12-18. Enduring Temptation. **S.** Heb. 2.5-18. Able to Succor. **S.** Heb. 4.14-16; 7.26-28. Tempted like Ourselves. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 1.9-13; Mt. 4.1-11 READ Luke 4.1-13; Heb. 2.17, 18; Heb. 4.14-16 COMMIT vv 3, 4

Mk. 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him: 11 and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

Mt. 1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. 3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:

and,

On their hands they shall bear thee up,
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

Mk. 9. *In those days.* When John was preaching and baptizing.—*Jesus was baptized of John.* John's baptism was "of repentance unto the remission of sins"; why did Jesus, who was sinless, submit to the rite? His baptism was (1) a public endorsement of John as a messenger of God. John would have hindered him, and in answer to his surprised words: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Mt. 3.14), Jesus said (2), "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Later Jesus once asked: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?" (Mt. 21.25): it was of God, hence he submitted to the righteous ordinance. It was, moreover (3), a rite he enjoined on his followers; and therefore he would himself submit to it; compare his words in his farewell prayer—For their sakes I sanctify myself, that

they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. And his baptism (4) was for him a formal setting apart, a consecration, for his great mission.—*In the Jordan.* Greek, *into the Jordan,* RVm.

10. *Straightway.* Immediately.—*He saw.* John as well as Jesus saw according to Jn. 1.33.—*The heavens rent asunder.* The heavens were opened unto him, Mt. 3.16. "The open sky was the revelation to Jesus Christ of new spiritual forces that lay within his reach. It was just as when Newton discovered the law of gravitation and heaven was opened to him: so Jesus saw the heavens opened" (*F. B. Meyer*).—*The Spirit as a dove descending upon him.* "The appearance of the Holy Spirit as a dove was a symbolical vision, and, as spiritual things are spiritually discerned, the vision was probably seen only by our Lord and the Baptist (*Dummelow*). "His baptismal experience is thus the vision of his call, analagous to the visions which the Old Testament prophets had at their respective calls" (*Holtzmann*). The words indicate his being filled with the Spirit of God and consecrated for his ministry, whether the manifestation was through sense or apart from sense.

11. *A voice came out of the heavens.* Compare There fell a voice from heaven, Dan. 4.31.—*Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.* See Mt. 12.18 and compare Isa. 42.1. In greater measure even than before he realized his divine Sonship and his Father's pleasure. In the words of Dr. G. A. J. Ross: His self-consecration was rewarded as ours is to-day by a clearer vision of the purposes of God, by a quiet consciousness of endowment with God-given capacity for his work, and by a vivid sense of holy and filial intimacy with the Divine Being himself.

Mt. 1. *Then.* After the baptism. Mark says *straightway.*—*Led up.* From the deep valley of the Jordan to the higher-lying wilderness.—*Of the Spirit.* The Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness, Mark says. The meaning is that Jesus yielded to the control of the Holy Spirit who had come to him in a special way at his baptism.—*To be tempted.* The Greek word πειρασθῆναι means *to be tested, put to the proof.* See Heb. 4.15. For the two ways of interpreting the temptation of Jesus, see the Historical Background.—*Of the devil.* "I do not know that our belief pro and con as to the devil has any special bearing upon our present duty. God in Christ is the only One, the only Power, that can help us overcome sin, whatever the source of sin is and from whatever the temptation to sin comes" (*Trumbull*).

2. *When he had fasted.* Voluntary fasts for special religious purposes were common with the Jews.—*Forty days.* Compare the fasting of Moses, Ex. 34. 28 and of Elijah, 1 K. 19.8, each of forty days' duration. The three temptations here recorded are the climax of a long period of temptation during this fast.—*Forty nights.* The Jews sometimes fasted only during the daytime.

3. *If thou art the Son of God.* As Jesus was assured at his baptism. Some interpreters think this was a temptation to doubt his Sonship; rather should the word *if* be taken in the sense of *since;* Since you know you have the power, why not make use of it? Why remain hungry when you have the power to make bread?—*These stones.* Recall Shakespeare's words: The sight of means to do ill deeds oft maketh ill deeds done; and see Oriental Light.—*Bread.* Greek, *loaves,* RVm.

4. *It is written.* In Dt. 8.3.—*Man shall not live by bread alone..* "Man shall not live—and I, therefore, being Man, shall not" (*Dods*).—*But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Recall the setting of these words in Dt. 8. The meaning of the quotation as used by Jesus is: The Israelites were hungry and were fed by the word of God, for he commanded his manna to fall; so I, who am hungry, may be miraculously fed if it is his will; my part is to trust to his providence, not to my own. In no instance did Jesus ever work a miracle for his own sake. There would have been no wrong in the changing of the stones into loaves of bread, if that had been the way God would send the "manna." In short, Jesus' answer to the first temptation is: Thou shalt trust.

5. *The devil taketh him...and he set him.* Compare the way in which the vision of Jerusalem came to Ezekiel, Ezek. 8.1-3.—*The holy city.* Jerusalem.—*Pinnacle of the temple.* Greek, *wing,* RVm. There were two wings to the temple; it was a height of several hundred feet from the top of the gallery on the

south to the bottom of the solid wall of masonry on which it rested, which was built up from the Kedron Valley.

6. *It is written.* Psa. 91.11, 12. "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose" (*Shakespeare,* in *Merchant of Venice*).—*On their hands they shall bear thee up.* This figure of speech in the Psalm expresses the divine protection. This was a temptation to give a "sign" of his Sonship such as the Jews later clamored for; Mt. 16.1.

7. *Again.* πάλιν, translated *again,* has here the force of *on the other hand.*—*It is written.* Dt. 6.16.—*Make trial of.* This is the meaning of the word *tempt* in the A. V. "Do not let it be a question whether God will save thee from dangers on which thou hast entered uncalled" (*Meyer*). Jesus' answer to the second temptation was: Thou shalt not tempt.

8, 9. *An exceeding high mountain.* See page 98. *All these things will I give thee.* "The claim here implied, and in Lk. 4.6 expressly asserted, viz., that the devil possesses the control of the kingdoms of the world and their glory, is not wholly unfounded, for the Scripture speaks of him as the prince or god of this world, Jn. 12.21; 14.30; 16.11; 2 Cor. 4.4" (*Broadus*).—*If thou wilt fall down.* Thus homage is expressed in the East.—*And worship me.* "The career of ambition and worldly power is metaphorically expressed as the worship of Satan; but to the disciples, ignorant and simple as they were, that career had to be presented in a flash of description and condemnation, such as would cut its way into their minds" (*Ramsay*).

10. *It is written.* Dt. 6.13. Jesus' answer to the third temptation was: Thou shalt obey.

11. *Then the devil leaveth him.* Resist the devil and he will flee from you, Jas. 4.7. Luke and the Sinaitic Palimpsest of Matthew add *for a season,* 4.13.—*Angels came and ministered.* Compare 1 K. 19.6, 7.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness.*

> Musing and much revolving in his breast,
> How best the mighty work he might begin
> Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
> Publish his God-like office, now mature. *Milton.*

1. *To be tempted of the devil.*

> But first I mean
> To exercise him in the wilderness;
> There he shall first lay down the rudiments
> Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
> To conquer sin and death, the two grand foes,
> By humiliation and strong sufferance. *Milton.*

5. *Cast thyself down.* He forced him not; he touched him not; only said, "Cast thyself down"; that we may know that whosoever obeyeth the devil casteth himself down, for the devil may suggest—compel he cannot. *Chrysostom.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *Command that these stones become bread.* Oriental bread is made in small, thin, flat loaves or cakes, and many of the stones lying about in the wilderness resembled them in shape. The sight of the stones may have increased the pangs of hunger.

The Jews were looking for a Messiah who would perform just such a miracle as that of turning stones into bread. The rabbis said that when he came the trees would bear fruit all the year round, and a single grape would load a wagon and from it men would draw wine as from a cask.

5. *Cast thyself down.* With this temptation it is interesting to compare a strange religious performance that is annually enacted at Kulu in the Him-

alayas. Where a cliff overhangs a deep, precipitous gorge, one end of a rope is made fast to the rock, the other being secured to a stake on the other side of the gorge. The length of the rope between the two points is twenty-five hundred feet, and the difference between the height of the two ends is several hundred feet: thus a dangerous aërial slide is contrived. Before the performer, or *jheri* as he is called, makes the perilous trip, the rope is thoroughly wet to prevent the saddle, through which the rope passes, from catching fire from the friction, and the lower end of the rope is wound with bits of carpet to check his speed near the stake. The terrific velocity of the descent is shown by the stream of smoke that trails from the wake of the saddle, despite the fact that the rope is wet. This slide through the air is supposed to reveal the will of the gods as to the crops of the approaching season. If the perilous trip is accomplished in safety, a plentiful harvest is assured. The ceremony is of ancient origin, and those who engage in it as *jheri* form a small caste by themselves.

8. *The devil taketh him into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world.* This is a common expression among the natives to-day, declares Mr. Wad-el-Ward. A man will take a visitor to the roof of his house to show him the beautiful view, declaring that "We can see the whole world from the top of my house."

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early in the summer of 27 A. D., when John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing, Jesus left his Nazareth home and came to him and was baptized. He was then a Man of thirty; of the eighteen years intervening between his visit to the temple as a Lad of twelve, our lesson two weeks ago, and his baptism, we have only the record that he was advancing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. Child life has never been considered a matter of sufficient importance to be chronicled in oriental literature. The forty days in the wilderness and the temptation immediately followed the baptism, and it is well that we have both in one lesson, crowded though it is with interesting and fruitful thought, for the one is the key of the other, the one the cause and the other the effect. See page 99.

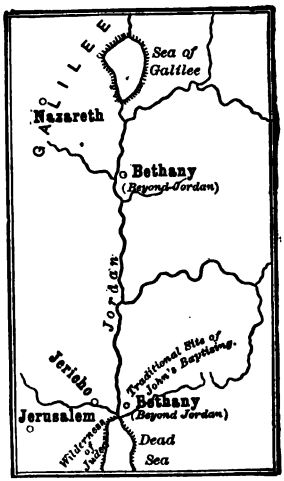
Two views are held by Christians in regard to the interpretation of the threefold temptation of Christ: some accept the account as having literally happened just as it is given, that Satan stood before Jesus and talked with him, and that he had the power of conveying him from place to place, that there was a mountain whence all the kingdoms of the world could be seen in a moment of time. Others give the account a spiritual interpretation, believing it describes a soul-struggle, a very real conflict, that took place in Jesus' mind at the beginning of his ministry. The story of this conflict must have been told to his followers by Jesus himself, and what more natural for this great Teacher than to picture it in words that they could understand, to represent the inner spiritual struggle by a series of fitting images? It is through symbol that spiritual reality can be made real to men whose vision is held prisoner by material things. It is, moreover, difficult to believe that to listen to the suggestions of Satan in person, knowing that they were of the evil one, would have been any temptation to Jesus.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

It is at the Jordan that our New Testament really begins, Luther declares. Let one of your pupils copy this little map on the blackboard and trace the route of Jesus from his home in Nazareth eastward to the Jordan, down the eastern side of the valley to the first Bethany beyond the Jordan, fifteen miles south of the Sea of Galilee. This is the site, according to recent scholarship, where John was baptizing as stated in Jn. 1.28. Then point out the traditional site of the baptism, at the ford about opposite Jericho. Here there is a heap of ruins which bear in Arabic the name of the Monastery of St. John, and here on the 6th of January, the day held sacred by the oriental church as the anniversary of Jesus' baptism, come crowds to bathe in the Jordan.

By the wilderness, to which Jesus withdrew immediately after the baptism,

is meant the desolate, hilly region west of the northern end of the Dead Sea and of the Jordan near its mouth. Those who interpret the temptation literally accept the traditional Mons Quarantania (Latin, Mountain of the Forty Days) as the exceeding high mountain of verse 8. In Ary Scheffer's painting of the scene Satan and Jesus are seated upon a peak, Satan with horns and hoofs and leer so evidently Satanic that one at once exclaims, It could have been no temptation to Jesus to bow down to him. Every spring a few devout Assyrian Christians are in the habit of coming here and remaining forty days, Dr. Tristam informs us, so as to keep their Lent on the spot where they believe our Lord fasted and was tempted.



The holy city was, of course, Jerusalem. The Arabs of to-day call it El-Kuds, The Holy. Assign paragraphs 83-84 and 20-22, and picture of the Wilderness of Judea, opp. page 14, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Ask your pupils how many of them ever fly kites. Get them to tell you how they do it, making it go against the wind, and how the tighter they hold the string the harder the kite tugs away at it and the higher it goes. If they hold the string of the kite loosely what happens? The kite has to feel the force of the pull in order to soar, for if it has nothing pulling against it it soon drops. So your boys or girls strive upward, growing in favor with God and man as Jesus did when a boy (recall the lesson of two weeks ago), because they have things that they must strive against, temptations that try to pull them down but really help them to rise when they pull against them and master them as the kite does the pull of its string. After a talk about what temptation is, tell them that Jesus when he had grown to be a Man came to John and was baptized (show Doré's picture of the Baptism, Union Press No. 22, or Murillo's, Brown, No. 741), and afterwards was tempted just as they sometimes are. (Show Hofmann's picture of the Temptation, Perry No. 797H, or Cornicelius', Brown No. 861.) Talk about the three-fold temptation, telling it as Jesus told it but making very simple the meaning of each temptation, the first being a temptation not to trust his heavenly Father to take care of him; the second a temptation to test his Father's care, and the third a temptation to make his own life an easy one instead of the hard one that was his Father's will for him. Tell them that these temptations of Jesus help us to overcome our temptations, and illustrate the thought by the lesson taught the little girl in a Home for Crippled Children. She was very unhappy because she could never run and play and go about as other children did, and she asked one day why it was that she must be different from other children and must bear this lameness all her life. "Every mother who sees you," she was told, "or hears about your trouble, will be more careful than ever to see that her baby does not have such a fall as you had when a baby. Can't you bear this sorrow if it will help keep ever so many other children safe and well?" After a long time the little girl bravely answered, "Yes, I can." So Jesus overcame his temptation and bore a great deal of suffering for our sakes, and we know he understands our troubles and helps us bear them. Talk about the temptations that you know come to your pupils; teach them this stanza:

Something brave within you, boys,
  Bids you manly be
When Sir Tempter's army comes
  To make you bend the knee;

and teach them to pray for help in their fight from the bravest, most manly Man that ever lived, our Saviour.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What characters in history do you greatly admire? For what reason do you admire this one, that one? Every one admires a brave man or woman who does something. We hear about Paul Revere's famous ride and our hearts thrill with the spirit of it; we stand with "the embattled farmers" at Lexington and we marvel at their daring; we see the brave soldiers under Wolfe stealthily pulling their heavy cannon up the rocky heights of Quebec, and we give them all honor for their endurance and courage.

A braver life was never lived than that of our Hero of this year's course, and braver deeds than his were never done; but that wonderful life was seemingly lived so calmly and easily that we may lose sight of the daring in the perfection of the living. Here at the outset of his ministry we gain a glimpse of a fierce struggle, a brave fight, and a great victory.

For Older Pupils. If the publishers of a novel can convince the public that it is replete with "human interest," the book is certain of a wide sale. What is meant by that phrase? Whatever else it may mean, it certainly means this, that the characters in the book are real, live characters, their experiences such as appeal to the interest of men and women everywhere because they are so true to life. Sometimes the "human interest" in the study of the greatest of all human lives is not grasped, because the emphasis is all upon the Son of God and not at all upon the Son of Man. In the two early events of Jesus' public ministry, let us concentrate our thoughts upon this human interest, their value to us because they show him as a Man submitting to the rite that he afterwards enjoined on all men and enduring suffering and tests as a Man and as a Man coming out triumphant.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I How Jesus was Tempted

The Forty Days in the Wilderness a Time of Counting the Cost. Baptism and temptation were parts of one experience; in the one Jesus received the call and consecration, in the other he considered the nature of the call, the way it must be accomplished, the goal to which it would ultimately lead him. The baptism had launched him upon his mission of redeeming the world. How should he accomplish it? His burden and responsibility as well as his joy must have overwhelmed him at this time, and in the tumult of emotions the need of being alone, far from the haunts of men, where he could commune with himself and with his Father, must have been imperative.

To a great character, says Jean Paul Richter, great joys and great sorrows serve as heights from whence to survey the whole pathway of life. Such a height was the baptism of water and of Spirit to Jesus, and in the forty days in the wilderness he surveyed the whole pathway which he was to tread. What method should he use? How should he begin his unique work? Where would this course and that course lead him? Which was in accordance with the will of his Father? Towards the close of his life Jesus told the multitudes how exacting was discipleship and bade them count the cost in the beginning. Which of you, he said, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have wherewith to complete it? Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? In the Wilderness after the baptism Jesus himself was first counting the cost before he undertook his life work.

The First Temptation. Should Jesus use his power for himself and create bread out of stones to satisfy his hunger? Since he is the Son of God, well pleasing to him, should he not be lifted above ordinary human needs and suffering? In short, should he look out for himself or should he trust his Father and accept whatever hunger or pain he might send? Could he not bear extreme hunger if that were his Father's will?

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, were the words of Scripture which he quoted as he repelled

the temptation. Man could not command stones to become bread, man must trust in God and look to him for help; so would he, though the Son of God; as Man not as God, he will suffer and overcome. This temperance in the use of supernatural power is the masterpiece of Christ, declares the author of "Ecce Homo." It is a moral miracle superimposed upon a physical miracle. The kind of life he prescribed to his followers is exemplified in the most striking way, by dedicating all his extraordinary powers to beneficent uses only, and deliberately placing himself for all purposes of hostility and self-defence on a level with the weakest.

To every one comes this same temptation early and often. No one has the power of working miracles, but each one has power of some sort, some God-given talent, whether of ability, or opportunity, or means; shall he use it all for himself or shall he use it for others? The organization of life with self as the center is all there is of sin, some one has well said.

The Second Temptation. The second and third temptations, like the first, were temptations to make his mission easier for himself, for they were but suggestions for inaugurating his kingdom in easy ways, ways that would quickly convince the people of his claims and would save him from Gethsemane and the cross.

His victory over the first temptation had proved his trust in God. Next comes a temptation along this very line—to presumption because of his trust. "Ah!" the devil says (I quote the words of Mr. S. D. Gordon in "Quiet Talks about the Tempter"), "we will just play on his trust in his Father. He is in a deeply religious mood. We will have a religious temptation." And so he shifts the scene. He takes the very height of the temple. He says this time, "Since thou art God's Son, cast thyself down." That is to say, "You trust the Father. That is splendid! Now just show the world how you do trust him. Cast yourself down before it, and they will accept you as their Messiah. Just show all the world how you trust your Father. But this temptation Jesus put away with another word from the Scriptures, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. Not to trust him would be a sin, but to put his care to a test would also be a sin.

This illustration from history, which aptly illustrated the nature of presumption, is quoted in the Expository Times. Once while William of Orange was laying siege to a town on the continent, an officer ventured to go with a message to the spot where he was directing the operation of his gunners. When the message was delivered, and the answer to it received, he still lingered. "Sir," said the Prince, "do you know that every moment you stand here is at the risk of your life?" "I run no more risk," replied the officer, "than your Highness." "Yes," said the Prince, "but my duty brings me here, and yours does not." A few moments later a cannon-ball struck the officer dead, but the Prince was untouched.

The Third Temptation. The Jews were chafing under the Roman yoke. They expected a Messiah who would free them and establish an earthly kingdom greater than that of their father David. For such a Messiah they would have sacrificed their lives as freely and gladly as the Japanese sacrificed theirs in their war with Russia. What might not Jesus accomplish if he yielded to their expectations and first established an earthly kingdom! Would not that be a quicker and an easier road to travel than the road to Calvary? To seek temporary instead of eternal good, to build up a material instead of a spiritual kingdom, would be to ally himself with the devil, to bow down and worship him. And it was written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.

A full explanation of how the acceptance of an earthly throne would have been a service of Satan I give in the words of Dr. Marcus Dods. It would have been so because it would have involved partnership with worldly men, compromise with those in power, the attraction to his rule of men who obeyed him from worldly motives and with selfish ends, Judases and Samaritan Simons, and because instead of furthering it would have hopelessly defeated the purpose for which God had sent him. Why, even the sick folk he healed and the demoniacs he cured he had to warn not to publish the benefits they had received, for by so doing men would have come to him for temporal aid and so have

interfered with his true work. Had he not deliberately put aside this temptation and chosen the cross as his throne, his kingdom would long since have gone the way of the empires of Sennacherib or Alexander or Augustus. It would have shone for a century or two with the spurious glory of arms and wealth and wide dominion, it would have admitted much that is of the devil, and it would have been undermined by its own worldliness.

II How He gained the Victory

He was Prepared Ahead. Most of us, may I say, wait until we are tempted, and then, half-scared, seek for help. But we should always pray ahead, and watch ahead, and take the ground before the evil one can come.

At one time Mr. Moody was on an ocean liner, in a great storm, and they were sure the boat was going to the bottom. They were all praying; everybody prays in a bad storm, you know. A gentleman told about going to one of the decks, and to his great surprise he saw Mr. Moody standing on the deck, not in the prayer-meeting down below, but standing quietly looking out over the raging waters. And he said, "Why! Mr. Moody, aren't you down in the prayer-meeting?" And in his quiet way Mr. Moody said, "Oh! I am prayed up." There is a marvellous generalship in praying ahead. We must not wait till we are driven to pray, if we would forestall the evil one.

And then the second suggestion is this. The Holy Spirit took possession of our Lord. Before the temptation came, the Spirit filled him with himself, to meet the temptation.

And yet I want to remind you of this,—the Lord Jesus was not filled with the Holy Spirit in a sense peculiar to himself. He insisted at every point in living the life of a man, dependent entirely upon the Holy Spirit. And the thing to mark is this, that just as the Son of Man as man was filled by the Holy Spirit before the temptation came, that he might meet and resist the temptation, even so you and I will be filled if he may have his way, filled beforehand that we may meet temptation as he did, prepared ahead. Condensed from *Quiet Talks about the Tempter,* by *S. D. Gordon.*

His Strength came from his Purpose to obey his Father's Will. You search through these records in Matthew and Mark and Luke, and mark the emphasis more and more on this, that our Master's strength in all his temptation, as in all his life on its purely human side, was this, his full, simple, cheery obedience to his Father's will, because it was his Father's will.

That is the very key on the human side to his whole marvellous career from Nazareth on to Calvary. There was an acquiescence in the Father's plan because it was the Father's plan, and there was a confidence in the Father's love, and he knew he could trust his Father. This is the very underneath basis of his side of this whole story. *S. D. Gordon,* in *Quiet Talks about the Tempter.*

He was filled with the Wisdom of the Scriptures. The native Christians of Uganda, Africa, think so much about the words of the Bible that their very word for an active Christian is a "Reader." When they would ask, Why do you not go to church? they put their question in this way, Why do you not read? Jesus was marvelously familiar with the Word of God, and marvelously he applied its words to the need of the moment. It is written, It is written, It is written: these were the words that he used to vanquish the tempter.

III How his Victory helps us

The Fact of Jesus' Temptation an Encouragement. Men are all temptable but they are not on that account all contemptible, Henry Ward Beecher was wont to say. Many a young Christian seems to think that because he has started on the Christian life he should be free from temptation to sin, and when a temptation comes, he doubts his Christianity. Not the temptation, but the yielding to the temptation, is the sin. The *Christian Herald* has a story showing how a judge was once taught this lesson by his old slave. "Sambo," the judge once questioned him, "how is it that you are always talking about your fight with the Devil—about the conflicts you have with the powers of darkness? I don't have any conflict with him. I don't have any of these trou-

bles, any of these fights that you have. How do you account for it?" Sambo could not answer him then, but he thought about it. Then one day the judge was out hunting, and killed one duck and wounded another. "Rush for that wounded duck," he shouted to Sambo. "Get that live one, never mind the dead one now." When Sambo came back from his errand he said: "Judge, I understan' dat question we were discussin' befo'. De Devil's after me; I'm wounded. But he's got you." When a man is dead in trespasses and sins, Satan lets him alone.

The Assurance of his Sympathy is Half our Battle. If we ask, as we must ask, What does Christ's experience of temptation and suffering do for us? Would we be any the worse off without his sympathy; what the better are we practically for it? Is it not a mere sentiment, this grateful rememberance of his suffering—if we ask such questions, we can with assurance reply that to know we have a sympathy like this really directed towards us and our conflicts is half the battle. A sympathy like this of Christ's, which is not ideal and sentimental, but which springs out of his real experience of this life, and which occupies his heart and determines his attitude and action towards this world and ourselves, has the utmost practical significance for us. We may not be at all times able to trace the practical steps which result from his sympathy, as we may often be quite unaware of the place we hold in some other persons' affections, and of the schemes for our good they contrive. But we do know that a sympathy so powerful as this of Christ's, so wrought into the very fibre of his spirit, by his first and sole experience of life on earth, must find utterance for itself in forms of thoroughly practical utility. *Marcus Dods,* in *Christ and Man.*

The Trust in his Help gains us the Victory.

Did we in our strength confide,
Our struggling would be losing,
Were not the right Man by our side,
The Man of God's own choosing,

sang Martin Luther. Often and in various ways he expressed his thought that it was a great thing for him that Jesus Christ was tempted, that it was this more than anything else that helped him to endure his own temptations. Mr. S. D. Gordon puts the thought in his intimate way thus: Our Lord knows how things are going with you; he knows all about your life. He comes down alongside in the wilderness and says: "Let us pull together. I will stay right by you." And he tells us how a big Scot called "Striker Jones" gained the victory over his temptation to drink. When he became a Christian he quietly said: "I shall never take a drink ony mair, lads; na drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." And they said: "Wait a bit, till the hot weather comes. When he gets as dry as a gravel-pit he will give in." But right through the hottest months he toiled on, yet never seemed to be tempted to drink. At last the time-keeper of the mill asked him if he did not miss his drink, and how he managed to keep away from it. "Well," just this way. To-day is the twentieth of the month. From seven till eight I asked that the Lord would help. He did, and I put a dot down on the calendar right near the twenty. From eight till nine he kept me, and I put down another dot. From nine to ten he has kept me, and now I give him the glory as I put down another dot. Just as I mark these dots I pray—'O Lord, help me, help me to fight it off for another hour.'"

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. And in all the temptations that come upon us we can be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Temptation is as surely our fate as it is one day to die. *Charles Reade.*

'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus;
Another thing to fall. *Shakespeare.*

Temptation is our opportunity of growth. *Marcus Dods.*
Recognition of temptation is half the fight against it. *S. D. Gordon.*

The divine power in one's hand must be turned always upon one's task, never upon one's benefit. *Wm. F. McDowell.*

If this wondrous Victor of the Wilderness be not allowed to help, there will be a French Waterloo in your life; if you will allow this great human Saviour, who was divine, too, to come alongside and help, there will be an English Waterloo in your life. *S. D. Gordon.*

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Jas. 4.7.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Because Jesus knew what it means to shrink from suffering, to feel the pull of ambition, to see the good in a course that is not in accordance with the divine will, he can understand and sympathize and help in similar temptations that come to us.

We may not use our powers solely for ourselves. We may not do wrong that good may come.

We need to strive for the same loyal obedience to the will of God.

It was when Jesus was assured of the approval of his Father that he was tempted. Temptations come to us when we are conscious of strength; let us not be off guard!

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Self-revelation of Jesus in the wilderness. See "Thoughts for Lent," Outlook, four numbers, March 14 to April 4, 1908.

2. The wrong of a struggle for mere existence so severe as to leave no time for the satisfaction of the higher needs of life. "How modern the first proposal of the tempter sounds!" exclaims Professor Peabody in "Jesus Christ and The Social Question." "It is precisely the use of power which the modern agitator would call most beneficent—the utilization of spiritual forces for economic production. Jesus, however, approaches the social question from within. He has nothing to say against bread-making, but when it is a question of the supreme need of life, he knows that there are necessities more profound than hunger."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Read the first four chapters of John and make a list of what is there told of Jesus' activity between his temptation and the beginning of his Galilean ministry. 2. How was John "delivered up"? (Mt. 14. 3.) 3. Through what country did Jesus go in going to Galilee from Judea, and what record have we of his stay there? 4. Why did Jesus leave Nazareth and make Capernaum his headquarters? (Lk. 4.16-31.) 5. When had Peter and Andrew first seen Jesus? (Jn. 1.35-51.) 6. From what city did Andrew and Peter come? (Jn. 1.44.) 7. What did these disciples give up when they obeyed the call of Jesus to follow him? (Mt. 4.18-22.) 8. What did the Jews endure from Antiochus Epiphanes? (Clipping, p. 20.) 9. What led to the Maccabæan revolt? (Clipping, p. 21.) 10. Who was the head of the Maccabæan family? (Clipping, p. 21.) 11. What happened under Judas Maccabæus? (Clipping, p. 21.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why was Galilee better for Jesus' work than Judea? (Clipping, p. 107; In the Master's Country, paragraph 91.) 2. Who had said the same thing that Jesus did, v. 15? 3. Are the Johns of verses 14 and 19 the same one? 4. These four disciples had followed Jesus before; to what were they now called? (Clipping, p. 107.) 5. Do you think that the four disciples realized at this time the character and the mission of Jesus? 6. Why did they obey his call? 7. How are people to-day called to be followers of Jesus? 8. What did Jesus mean by his phrase "fishers of men"? 9. Which of the twelve disciples were won to Christ by the appeal of a single person? (Andrew, Peter, John, James, Philip, Nathanael, Matthew.)

Note Book Work. Continue the work undertaken for the year. See suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON IX—MARCH 3

THE CALL OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES

Golden Text

The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest. Mt. 9.37, 38.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 1.14-28. The Call of the First Disciples. **T.** Luke 5.1-11. The Call of Peter. **W.** Luke 5.27-32. The Call of Levi. **T.** Acts 4.1-12. The Boldness of Peter. **F.** 1. Tim. 6.11-19. Faithfulness of a Disciple. **S.** Matt. 19.23-30. The Reward. **S.** Eph. 4.1-13. Fidelity to Call. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 1.14-28; Luke 5.1-11 READ Mt. 4.18-22 COMMIT vv 16, 17

14 Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the
gospel of God, 15 and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is
at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.
16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the
brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. 17 And Jesus
said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of
men. 18 And straightway they left the nets, and followed him. 19 And going
on a little further, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who
also were in the boat mending the nets. 20 And straightway he called them:
and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went
after him.
21 And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he
entered into the snyagogue and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his
teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes. 23
And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit;
and he cried out, 24 saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene?
art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of
God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace ,and come out of him.
26 And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out
of him. 27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among
themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth
even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. 28 And the report of him went out
straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14-11. *After John was delivered up.* See Mt. 14.3-5; Lk. 3.19, 20.—*Jesus came into Galilee.* He had been baptized in Judea, Jn. 3.22.—*The gospel.* Or, *good tidings,* RVm.—*The time is fulfilled.* The world is now ready for the new order of things. See Gal. 4.4.—*The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye.* This had been the exhortation of John the Baptist, Lesson VII. *The kingdom of God* is an inward, spiritual kingdom. "*At hand* means either that the kingdom is imminent in the sense that it will soon be realized, or that it has drawn near to men, whether or no they recognize the fact of its present realization" (*Exp. Times*).—*Believe in the gospel.* Believe the good news that the kingdom of God is near.

16. *Simon.* Who is called Peter, Mt. 4.18.—*And Andrew.* The brothers were from Bethsaida, Jn. 1.44.—*Casting a net in the sea.* Literally, the Greek reads

throwing about in the sea: the *net* is understood. They were letting the net down and lifting it up, first on one side of the boat and then on the other. The successful use of this net, says Dr. W. M. Thomson, requires a keen eye, an active frame, and great skill in throwing. The fishermen, must, too, be patient, watchful, wide-awake, and prompt to sieze the exact moment to throw. These were qualities needed by fishers of men.

17-20. *Come ye afer me.* This was not the first time they had seen Jesus; see the Historical Background.—*To become fishers of men.* "The fisherman is to catch men, as David, taken from among the sheepfolds, was to feed them, Ps. 78.71,72" (*Trench*). "The fisherman Peter did not lay aside his nets but changed them" (*Augustine*). It is unlikely that they understood at this time all that this phrase meant.—*James.* Or, *Jacob,* RVm.—*With the hired servants.* He was a man of some means, then.

21-22. *He entered into the synagogue and taught.* In Old Testament times we hear only of the Tabernacle and then of the Temple. In New Testament times sacrifices were offered only in the Temple at Jerusalem, but every town and village had its synagogue for worship, an institution which evidently had its origin during the Babylonian captivity.— *He taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.* The scribes constantly cited some well-known rabbi as authority for their teaching: Jesus said (Jn. 3.11) Verily, verily I say unto thee, we speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and again (Jn. 7.16) my teaching is not mine but his that sent me. "The highest praise for a scribe was that he resembled a cemented cistern which lost no drop of water put into it. He was bound never to teach otherwise than as he had been taught. Christ as a teacher was not a cistern, but a spring, clear, abundant, and perennial" (*Gilbert*).

Ruins of a Synagogue at Kefr Bereim

23. *A man with an unclean Spirit.* This is another term for *demon-possessed.* Six cases of demoniac possession are described in detail in the Gospels; here and in Mk. 5.2; 7.28; 9.25; Mt. 9.32 and 12.22; and there is a reference to the case of Mary Magdalene, Lk. 8.2, besides general references to the cure of demonized ones—Mk. 1.34, 39; 3.11; 6.13; Lk. 10.17. Many scholars to-day consider them cases of epilepsy or lunacy. The words of Dr. Henry Burton are worthy of consideration: Have we not seen, in mesmerism, cases of real possession, where the weaker human will has been completely overpowered by a stronger will, when the subject was no longer himself, but his thoughts, words and acts were those of another? And are there not, in the experiences of all medical men and of ministers of religion, cases of depravity so utterly foul and loathsome that they cannot be explained except by the Jewish taunt, "He hath a devil?"

24. *We.* The plural may indicate the presence of several evil spirits, but if the man was insane, and believed himself possessed of an evil spirit, it would be natural for him to use the plural.—*The Holy One of God.* "If the possession was real, the demon's confession was probably extorted by fear. If the possession was not real, but imagined by the insane man, the confession was probably due to the man's instinctive sense that a person with supernatural powers was present, ready to heal him" (*Dummelow*).

25-26. *Him.* Or, *it,* RVm.—*Hold thy peace.* Literally, *Be muzzled,* as if spoken to a beast, 1 Cor. 9.9. *Tearing.* Or, *convulsing,* RVm. "No doubt epileptically, throwing him to the ground" (*Morrison*).

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

19. *Come ye after me.*

Lead me, Man divine,
Where'er thou will'st, only that I may find
At the long journey's end thy image there,
And grow more like to it. For art not thou
The human shadow of the infinite love
That made and fills the endless universe?
The very Word of him, the unseen, unknown
Eternal Good! *R. W. Gilder.*

24. *What have we to do with thee?* Foul things that lurk under stones hurry out of the light when you lift the covering. Spirits that love the darkness are hurt by the light. It is possible to recognize Jesus for what he is, and to hate him all the more. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of Mark.*

27. *With authority.* It is impossible to appreciate a picture with your face at the canvas; but even his blind generation was arrested by Jesus. There was a note in his words that caught their ear, the echo of divine authority. *John Watson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

16. *They were fishers.* The Sea of Galilee was celebrated for its great shoals of fish, and there were several hundred fishing-boats on the lake at this time. To-day fish are sent from the lake to Samaria and Jerusalem and even to Damascus.

18. *And straightway they left the nets and followed him.* To us it would seem a most difficult matter for any one to leave his occupation and without means of earning a livelihood follow a leader from place to place. But we must remember that the climate of Palestine is more genial than ours, food and clothing and shelter are more simple. Yet there was sacrifice of comfort and of home ties. One who lightly said to Jesus, "I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," Jesus reminded that the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Matthew narrates the calling of the four disciples immediately after the account of the temptation of Jesus, about a year must have elapsed between the two, during which occurred the events narrated in the first four chapters of the fourth Gospel. After his victory in the wilderness Jesus remained for a time in the neighborhood of John the Baptist. John was baptizing at Bethany beyond Jordan and before priests and Levites bore his testimony to Jesus as the Messiah, and pointed him out to two of his own disciples, Andrew and John, as the Lamb of God. These two followed Jesus, and on the morrow Andrew brought his brother Simon (Peter), and probably John his brother James, to see Jesus. Philip was called and he brought Nathanael. With these followers Jesus went to Cana of Galilee where he wrought his first miracle, that of turning water into wine, and then made a short stay in Capernaum. In April A. D. 27, he went to Jerusalem to attend the passover.

Now began his early Judean Ministry. He cleansed the temple and talked with Nicodemus; while he tarried in Judea with his disciples and they baptized, the jealousy of the disciples of the Baptist was aroused, but John told them that his joy was now fulfilled, that Jesus must increase and he must decrease. John was imprisoned by Herod and Jesus left for Galilee, going through Samaria, and at Sychar talking with the woman of Samaria and tarrying there for two days.

Now began the first period of the Galilean ministry which lasted from his return to Galilee in Dec. 27, A. D. to the choosing of the twelve disciples in May 28 A. D. The first two verses of our lesson record his return. At Cana he cured the nobleman's son. On visiting his early home at Nazareth he was

rejected by his old associates, and he removed to Capernaum, making that city thereafter his headquarters. We suppose that John had been with Jesus throughout the eight months of the Judean ministry because he records it in the fourth Gospel; and that Peter and the rest were not with him, because the Gospel of Mark, which is thought to have been based on Peter's testimony, omits all mention of it. Now at the beginning of his Galilean ministry Jesus calls the four fishermen to permanent discipleship, the nucleus of his band of followers. Luke says that the call followed the first miraculous draught of fishes (5.1-11), but that this is the same incident is disputed.

Jesus' ministry was an itinerant one, he went about from place to place traveling and preaching and healing. The nature of his work made the fellowship and apprenticeship of disciples necessary. The prophets had had their scholars and the scribes had had their schools, it was a long established custom, yet the need of a training school was never so great as now. Jesus had many things to say that only trained hearers could fathom, many things to do that only loyal pupils could undertake, a legacy of service to leave that only skilled followers could carry out. His first disciples he gathered from the society brought together by his forerunner.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus withdrew from Judea into Galilee. Galilee was better suited than Judea for his ministry; the people were less under the rule of priests and Pharisees, more tolerant, more enterprising, than were the Judeans. Dr. A. B. Bruce, in the "Galilean Gospel," points out the fitness of the region about the Sea of Galilee for his ministry. His gospel was emphatically, he says, a gospel of hope, and it was meet that it should be cradled in a region of beauty and sunny brightness. Conceive for a moment Christ commencing his ministry in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea! How unsuitable that land of death, and sterility, and desert desolation, to be the birth-place of a gospel which was to remove the blight and curse brought on the world by sin. Let John the Baptist commence his ministry there, but not Jesus.

John's ministry was legal, Christ's was evangelic; John's temper was severe, gloomy, despairing, Christ's was genial, kindly, hopeful. Let John, then, by all means, go to the Dead Sea, with its salt-encrusted shore and its barren rocks, and here, amid the grimness of nature, preach repentance and the near approach of a Messiah whose coming, as he represents it, is awful news rather than good news. But let Jesus come to the bright, sunny, beautiful Sea of Galilee, and on its shore preach his Gospel of peace, and love, and hope, and show himself as the sympathetic Son of man, and herald a kingdom of grace to whose blessings even the most sinful and miserable are welcome.

The exact site of Capernaum, like that of the Baptist's ministry, is one of the hotly disputed questions in Biblical geography. Modern Tell Hum and Khan Minyeh, two or three miles apart on the northwestern shore of the Lake, are the sites over which scholars dispute as to the location of Capernaum. See the Geographical Background of Lesson III, last quarter. Assign paragraphs 88-91, 155, and 20-24, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

I. Four Friends Found Fishing.
II. Four Fishers Follow Faithfully.
III. Four Followers Fetch Fellows.

Write this outline upon your board and limit your lesson to it, omitting the cure of the demon-possessed. Describe the scene by the lake, the fishing and the mending of nets. See Light from Oriental Life, and show Tissot's picture No. 15, entitled "Calling of Peter and Andrew." Begin your talk about Part II with questions as to the game "Follow my Leader" and its rules. Just as the players go wherever the leader goes and do whatever he does, so the disciples went wherever their great Leader went in order that they might learn to do what he is doing. Teach Whittier's stanza, page 111. In connection with part III, use the material given in Topic III, especially the story about little Kathleen.

Give copies of the stanza on page 115 to learn for next week.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Each Pope of Rome has a signet ring with which he seals his important papers. His name is engraved upon it, and when he dies the ring is broken and a new one made for his successor. But the rings of all the Popes have a figure representing Peter in a fishing-boat, holding a line with bait in the water. The Pope, you know, claims to be a successor of Peter, and his signet ring is called "the Fisherman's Ring." Which four of the disciples were fishermen? When had they first seen Jesus? (Historical Background.) These four fishermen were to become fishers of men, and Jesus was to be their Teacher in this great work. What does it mean to be a fisher of men?

For Older Pupils. Last week we saw how Jesus had been tempted to begin his ministry. How was it? To-day we see how he did begin it in Galilee. Instead of hurling himself from the pinnacle of the temple and calling all men to witness that his miraculous escape from death proved his Messiahship, instead of spectacular display of power, he began so quietly and unostentatiously that no one in Galilee knew that the Messiah was in their midst, engaged in the work that was to revolutionize the world. He told men to repent—to change their way of living; he gathered a litle band of followers and began teaching them; he told them that they were in turn to teach others, that their fellowship with him should lead them to bring others to him. When the great scientist Agassiz was asked what was his greatest work in America, he replied: "The training of three men was the greatest work I did in America. One has abandoned my theories, one has become indifferent to me; but the scientific training of three scholars is my greatest work." So the greatest work that the Master Teacher did while on earth was the training of his scholars to know him and to carry on his work.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Followers of Christ

The Call and the Answer. Simply and naturally Jesus summoned his first disciples, and willingly and promptly they obeyed the call. Jesus was ready to take them, all unlearned as they were, into his school and teach them. They were ready to study under this new Rabbi, willing to make the sacrifice that leaving home and occupation meant, though as yet they knew not fully the greatness of their Teacher.

What does following Jesus Christ mean? I suppose that there is scarcely one of us who would not claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ. But what does it mean to follow Jesus Christ? Well, what does it mean to follow any man? If, when Mr. Hewitt defeated Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Henry George in the municipal campaign for the mayoralty of New York City, I had said that I was a follower of Henry George, you would have understood, of course, that I believed to an extent in Mr. George's views; that I was supporting him in his candidacy for the mayoralty; that I was lending my influence to his election; that I believed in his personal character, and was willing to trust to him the large responsibilities of the office for which he was a candidate. Is that what it means to follow Christ? Not much more than that, if Jesus Christ was only a man. But Jesus Christ was more than a man, and to follow him means more than simply to believe in his views, or to have confidence in his character, or to be a supporter of Jesus for the position which he is claiming as spiritual King of all the children of his Father. It means more than that to follow Christ, for Christ demands of those who follow him what no man ever dared to demand of his followers. He demands that every thought shall be brought into captivity to his obedience; he demands that all life shall be laid down at his feet, and that he himself shall be given the throne and sceptre in the human life that would call itself his.

There is no need of effort in making one's life like Christ's. Christ him-

self will make the life like his which is willing to assume toward him the attitude of discipleship, and to say to him, "Master, I follow thee," for Christ himself will put into operation in that life the principles that make his own life. *Robert E. Speer,* in *The Master of the Heart.*

What following Jesus Christ means in India. There she sat, queen of her home. The sons were expected and she had been preparing for their coming. Her little grandchildren played about her, each one of them dear as the jewel of her eye. How could she leave it all, how could she leave them all,—home, all that it stands for; children, all that they mean?

Then she looked at me again, and I shall never forget the look. It seemed as if she were looking me through and through, and forcing the answer to come. She spoke in little short sentences, instinct with intensity. "I cannot live here and break my caste. If I break it I must go. I cannot live here without keeping my customs. If I break them I must go. You know all this. I ask you, then, tell me yes or no. Can I live here and keep my caste, and, at the same time, follow your God? Tell me yes or no!"

I did not answer her—how could I? But she read the answer in my eyes, and she said, as she had said before, "I cannot follow so far—so far, I cannot follow so far!" *Amy Wilson-Carmichael,* in *Things as They Are.*

II Fishers of Men

I will make you to become Fishers of Men. Jesus called the fishermen to follow him and then he taught them how to carry on his work by calling others. Following Jesus means entering the service of Jesus. We are not following him unless we are doing his work. We are not loyal members of his kingdom if we have no interest in doing our part toward enlarging that kingdom. How Jesus taught his disciples to become fishers of men we shall see throughout our year's study: the lessons that they learned we may learn.

Catch-my-Pal. If you read the English papers you must see frequent references to the "Catch-My-Pal" work. You see at once that it is a temperance movement, but you may wonder at its name. "The Protestant Total Abstinence Union" is the real title under which its members are enrolled, but "Catch-My-Pal" is the name they delight to use. One summer day three years ago a man walking along a street in Armagh, Ireland, came upon a man lying dead drunk in the gutter. He picked the drunkard up, saw that he was cared for till sober, and persuaded him to stop drinking. This reclaimed man in his turn went after a "pal" of his and induced him to reform. The two men reached a third; and the work continued, and soon it was spoken of as the "Catch-My-Pal" movement. To-day it is an organization many thousand strong.

The principle of this movement should be that of every Christian member of every Sunday-school class. Every one has a "pal" in whose welfare he is interested; if he is a true follower of Christ he will seek to bring his friend, too, under Christian influence. In some Sunday-schools there is kept a "Fisherman's Roll" on which are recorded the names of those who have brought in new members. Bringing others to Sunday-school where they may learn with the disciples to become Christ's followers is work that all can do. Perhaps you are the only one who can influence some companion to join the School of Christ. "Just take a pencil and figure out how many years it would take for the whole world to be converted if each year each disciple were to start one other to follow the Lord," suggests Dr. Schauffler. "Start with only ten million true disciples; how long would it take to Christianize the world? Would one hundred years accomplish the task? Much less. The whole world would be Christianized in seven years." "Is it possible," questions Dr. Cuyler, "for one to be a true Christian himself and yet be doing nothing to make other men Christians, too?" "Every member a Christian or a soul-winner," is the motto of a class in Birmingham. Is this the purpose of your class?

A Boy's Experience. One bright afternoon the leader of a boy's guild was standing on a street corner when one of the members rushed up to him excitedly. Had there been a foot-ball victory?

"I've got him," cried the boy, "he wasn't easy, but I kept at him and he is coming in!"

"Good, good!" exclaimed the leader. "I am very glad."

The boy's eyes sparkled. He was only fifteen years old. It meant something to him when he had won a victory for his Master.

"And you'll keep it up, won't you?" asked the leader.

"Yes, sir;" said the boy emphatically. "There's another fellow I'm trying for." *Philip S. Howard.*

Men's Experience. The Bible Class in the First Methodist Sunday-school of Brazil, Indiana—now the largest Sunday-school in the world—was organized at the beginning of the year with twenty-two men. It adopted as its motto, "We want to know the truth", and for a working plan, "Every man get a man." Before the middle of the year its membership was thirteen hundred, half the voting population of the town.

III Missionary Topic Laborers in the Harvest

Willing Fishers in Korea. For the circumstances in which Jesus spoke the words that have been selected for our Golden Text, see Lesson III of the Second Quarter. At all times it has been true that the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. We shall give thought to the need in a later lesson; to-day let us give thought to the native laborers in mission lands who have grasped the great thought that "the Spirit did not come to save them alone, but to make them heralds, messengers, evangelists, souls on fire that the light may be flashed over the dark places of the earth."

Instead of giving money to send teachers to others the native Christians in Korea are in the habit of going themselves to the work. An American missionary gives this result of a recent appeal for workers:

At the village of Ichun an appeal was made to the people for days of service during the next three months, and a remarkable scene followed. Men and women arose in all parts of the building, and made their offerings. A merchant said, "I am going to do this work continually; but I will devote my *entire* time to it one week each month." A boatman stated that he would give sixty days to the Lord during the three months. Another declared that he would give every day except Sunday, when he wanted to attend church himself! A travelling merchant said he was going to preach all along the road, but he would contribute six entire days. A blind man said he would give the full ninety days to the work. One of the women said she could only contribute six days, but she was going to preach to every one she met. The total number of days of service promised was 2,721; or the equivalent of one man preaching Christ constantly for nearly seven and a half years.

A Little Would-be Laborer. In a letter to *The Christian* a mother gives this touching story of her child.

One morning, during family worship, my husband prayed: "Lord, help Kathleen to love Jesus." The little one, who was present as usual, startled us by cutting short the request, and exclaiming: "You mustn't say, 'Help Kathleen to love Jesus,' because I do love Him." Then when the prayer was altered to "Help Kathleen to love Jesus more and more," the golden curls nodded approvingly, and the baby lips smilingly whispered, "That'll do."

It was about this time that Kathleen heard a colored bishop appealing for recruits for the African mission field "to teach the black children about Jesus." The call reached one heart at least. "I shall go when I be growed up," she said, and from that time on, until another call came, she continually referred to her "black children" who were waiting for her to "tell them 'bout Jesus." A black dolly with a woolly head lay clasped in her arms when the Heavenly Reaper came a year later, in the gray dawn of an autumn morning, and took the little flower away.

SENTENCE SERMONS

The followers of Christ are those who are seeking to become what he is. *George A. Gordon.*

Every disciple must be a discipler. *A. J. Gordon.*

The end of training is not character but character for service. *W. F. McDowell.*

No disciple is a real disciple till he becomes a follower, going after the Shepherd as one that follows by name and is drawn by love. *Horace Bushnell.*

The salvation of each is for the service of all. *John Edgar McFadyen.*

The call is not only for more men, but better men, to serve as Christ conductors, through whom his power can be released. *John R. Mott.*

The great problem is not how to save the world, but how to persuade each Christian that it is his business to be the means of saving some one man in the world. *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart;
I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. Ps. 40.10.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

He who called the disciples to him is always calling men and women, boys and girls, to follow him. In the words of Whittier—

In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow thee.

The Master Teacher who trained the disciples in his school is always engaged in his work of training followers. He who changed ordinary fishermen into great apostles and leaders is still making strong, noble lives out of ordinary people.

Like those early disciples, we are in the school of Christ to learn what he did that we may know what we are to do. Possibly the reason we do not know and fulfill our task is that we spend so little time with him.

Our prayer. Not hesitatingly nor questioningly, but straightway, would we obey. May we know what it means to follow thee that we may be able with thy help to bring others to thee. We would win to thee those who know thee not as Lord and Master. Show us how to become skilful fishers of men.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Modern evangelists.
2. The calling of missionaries.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What had happened in the synagogue whence they came, v. 29? (Last lesson.) 2. What was Simon's other name? 3. Tell what means the Talmud prescribes for the cure of a fever. (Clipping, p. 113.) 4. What does the word *divers* mean, v. 34? 5. What was the law in regard to lepers? (Clipping, p. 113.) 6. Why did Jesus bid the leper show himself to the priest? (Lev. 14.2) 7. Of what prophecy does Matthew say Jesus' healing was a fulfilment? (Mt. 8.16-17.) 8. How did the Romans regard suffering and misfortune? (Clipping, p. 114.) 9. What happened under Jonathan Maccabæus? (Clipping, p. 22.) 10. Under Simon Maccabæus? (Clipping, p. 22.) 11. Under John Hyrcanus? (Clipping, p. 22.) 12. Between John Hyrcanus and the coming of the Romans? (Clipping, p. 22.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why was Capernaum an excellent place for Jesus' headquarters? 2. Why does Mark add that she "ministered unto them," v. 31? 3. Why did the friends of the sick people wait till sunset before they brought them to Jesus to be cured? 4. What did the leper believe and what did he doubt? 5. What leper did we hear about in our last year's lessons, and how was he cured? 6. What is the lesson for us in these cures of Jesus?

Note Book Work. Continue the work undertaken for the year. See Suggestions to Teachers, p. 17 of The Introduction.

LESSON X—MARCH 10

JESUS THE HEALER

Golden Text

Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases. Mt. 8.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 1.29-45; Mt. 4.23-25. **Jesus** the Healer. **T.** John 4.46-53. Healing of a Nobleman's Son. **W.** John 5.2-15. Cure at Bethesda. **T.** Mt. 12.9-21. Healing on the Sabbath. **F.** Acts 16.14-18. Power of Christ's Name. **S.** Acts 9.32-43. Healing Through Disciples. **S.** Acts 19.8-20. Healing Power. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 1.29-45; Mt. 4.23-25 READ Luke 4.38-44; 5.12-16; Mt. 8.1-4
COMMIT vv 40, 41

29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her: 31 and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. 36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him: 37 and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. 38 And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. 39 And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out demons.

40 And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 41 And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou made clean. 42 And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean. 43 And he strictly charged him, and straightway sent him out, 44 and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. 45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

29. *When they...came.* Some ancient authorities read ***when he was come out of the synagogue; he came,*** RVm. *They* refers to Jesus and his four disciples, last lesson.—*Simon.* Peter.

30, 31. *Simon's wife's mother.* Tyndale's Version has the useful phrase *Symones motherelawe.*—*Lay sick of a fever.* Fever is to this day, says Dr. Tristram, very prevalent in this seething plain and on its borders.—*She ministered unto them.* This shows the completeness of her cure.

32-34. *When the sun was set.* The Sabbath, verse 21, ended at sunset, and not before then was it deemed lawful to bring the sick for cure.—*Possessed with demons.* Or, *demoniacs,* RVm.—*All the city.* A graphic addition given

only by Mark.—*Divers.* Various.—*Suffered not the demons to speak.* The reason is given in verse 45.—*Because they knew him.* Many ancient authorities add *to be Christ.* See Lk. 4.41, RVm.

35 *And they prayed.* It was his frequent custom to go apart for prayer, and here we see the secret of his power: "With one hand clasped in the hand of the Father in heaven, and the other resting upon the head of some needy child of earth, a circuit was established through which ran endless love and perfect peace."

40. *A leper.* The Greek λεπρός comes from λέπος a scale; leprosy is a scaly disease.—*And kneeling down to him.* Some ancient authorities omit these words, RVm.—*Thou canst make me clean.* The law in Leviticus declared a leper unclean and did not permit him to associate with the "clean."

41. *He stretched forth his hand and touched him.* The one who touched a leper was made "unclean," according to the law. "If a leper even put his head into a place it became unclean. No less a distance than four cubits (six ft.) had to be kept from the leper, or if the wind came from that direction one hundred cubits was scarcely sufficient." The Mosaic law allowed the priest to touch a leper, and Jesus by his act either claims the authority of a priest or the greater authority of one superior to the law of Moses.

43-45. *Strictly.* Or, *sternly,* RVm.—*Go show thyself to the priest.* To get his "Bill of health," prove himself free from leprosy.—*Which Moses commanded.* Lev. 13.49; 14.2-32.—*Unto them.* The priest and the people who had known him as a leper.—*Matter.* Or, *word,* RVm.—*Jesus.* Greek, *he,* RVm.—*A city.* Or, *the city,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *When they were come out of the synagogue they came into the house.* These words stand for life's common and oft-repeated experience. Every day in some wise we have this passage from the synagogue to the house, from the hour of refreshment to the hour of toil, from the place where help is found to the place where help is needed. We have to go forth from our too brief opportunities for devotion, from the Book, from some gracious meditation or some pure and uplifting companionship, from some hour that has at least made a simple virtue grow great and noble before our inward eye and stand forth in all its kingliness; and we have to strive after that same virtue amid relationships and tasks and aspects of life that conspire to reduce that glorious thing to the level of an unavailing commonplace. *Percy C. Ainsworth,* in *The Pilgrim Church.*

32. *And all the city was gathered at the door.* A man makes a large gift; the rumor of it is in the paper the next day, and the following morning his mail is filled with appeals for help from the people of the city. A poor woman down in an alley is discovered by her neighbors to be helpful to others, full of sympathy, good judgment, readiness, and immediately all others in the neighborhood turn to her for sympathy and help. The citizen who is discovered to have qualities of leadership immediately finds the city at his door, calling upon him for even more than he can think of doing.

Why this snow-storm of appeals every morning in the mail? Why this call of the unemployed? Why my sympathies drawn upon? Why cannot they turn to others? And there is danger, my friends—danger lest the sweetest, and the finest, and the most helpful characters become a bit aggravated, irritated, possibly cynical, through the over-pressure because the city stands so close at the door.

But as we think it over, is it not a cause for the deepest gratitude, when one of us finds ever so humble a citizen at our doors? Is there any one of us that is ready to envy a man to whom no appeal comes, because it is well-known that he never answers an appeal? *Bishop W. Lawrence,* in *Christ in the City.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

30. *Sick of a fever.* This was a disease very common in that region. The Talmud calls it the "burning fever" and "prescribes for it a magical remedy,

of which the principal part is to tie a knife, wholly of iron, by a braid of hair to a thornbush, and to repeat on successive days, Exodus 3.2, 3, then 4, and finally 5, after which the bush is to be cut down, while a certain magical formula is pronounced." Turning from this direction concerning incantation, to the account given by Mark, we seem to be going out of one world into another, and it is indeed passing from the world of superstition and magic, of darkness and misery and hopelessness, to the world of simplicity, life, health, and goodness. *E. B. Mason.*

31. *And the fever left her.* In the East it is universally believed that one who comes from God can heal disease. The term "hakeem" is applied to one who is a wise man, or is a physician. The two sorts of wonder-workers have the same title. It is thought that he who can forgive sins can also heal bodies. It was so before the days of Jesus, it was so in his day, it is so now. Had Jesus shown no power to cure bodily ills, he would have won no such confidence over the people as he gained. Modern Christian missionaries find the advantage and the necessity of ministering in Christ's name in non-Christian lands to diseased bodies in order to win the confidence of those whose spirits they would win to the truth of Christ's most precious message. *Sunday School Times.*

41. *Being moved with compassion.* The ancient world knew no pity for weakness or misfortune. The reign of might, and the right of might were things unquestioned. If a man chose to torture his slave or even slay his child, it was his own affair. To be weak or poor, was not only to be miserable, but deservedly miserable. Life had little value, and of the eighty thousand people who filled the Colosseum, and watched the dying gladiator, "butchered to make a Roman holiday," not one ever thought of pitying him. Nor was even the Jew much better than the Roman in his attitude to misfortune and weakness. The blind man doubtless deserved his blindness, or he would not be blind; suffering was the wrath of heaven; and the one convincing proof of the favor of God was a visible prosperity; and thus, but in a slightly different way, for the Jew also, as for the Roman, might was the only right. *W. J. Dawson,* in *The Divine Challenge.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Beginning with the curing of the demoniac in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, our last lesson, and continuing through the visit and cure at Peter's home, the many cures at evening, and the early departure to a desert place where still the multitudes followed him, we have the record of twenty-four hours of Jesus' life. In Cotton Mather's phrase, this "angelic conjunction of medicine with divinity" was often seen in the practice of the Great Physician. Here the disciples gained a glimpse of the depth and breadth and power of their Master's sympathy, of his readiness to sacrifice himself for the needs of others. They had just entered into his school and the art of relieving suffering and curing disease was part of their education.

Lepers Begging by the Roadside.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

It is the Galilean ministry that the Synoptists mainly tell. Galilee, where Jesus went about doing good, was exceedingly small to be the scene of such a life. For Capernaum see last lesson. We hear of several spots in Capernaum where he taught and healed—the synagogue, Peter's house, "his own house," "another house," Jairus' house, Simon the Pharisee's house, the receipt of toll, by the lake, in the streets.

Canon Tristram observes that all the places where Jesus is said to have met lepers are in the central districts of Galilee and Samaria, where to-day the colonies of lepers are most numerous, no town and few large villages being without its little lazar colony sitting by the roadside.

Assign paragraphs 155-157 and 30-31, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Two thoughts you will seek to leave with your pupils; that Jesus was always glad to help the sick, and that there are ways in which they themselves can be helpful to those in trouble. The lesson story is crowded with incidents; let your pupils see the great Physician at work. Show Tissot's pictures Nos. 22 and 32. Tell something about the work your church and Sunday-school are doing for hospitals here or in mission lands, and win their interest in the work. Discuss ways in which they can be helpful. Tell simply Bishop Berry's story, page 116. Let your pupils repeat these words:

"To have willing feet,
A smile that is sweet,
A kind, pleasant word for all that you meet,
That's what it is to be helpful!"

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Have one of your pupils recite these stanzas (quoted by Dr. Dawson in "The Empire of Love") which will place at once the whole lesson thought before your class.

When the golden evening gathered on the shore of Galilee,
When the fishing boats lay quiet by the sea,
Long ago the people wondered, tho' no sign was in the sky,
For the glory of the Lord was passing by.

Not in robes of purple splendor, not in silken softness shod,
But in raiment worn with travel came their God,
And the people knew his presence by the heart that ceased to sigh
When the glory of the Lord was passing by.

For he healed their sick at even, and he cured the leper's sore,
And sinful men and women sinned no more,
And the world grew mirthful hearted, and forgot its misery
When the glory of the Lord was passing by.

Not in robes of purple splendor, but in lives that do his will,
In patient acts of kindness comes he still;
And the people cry with wonder, tho' no sign is in the sky,
That the glory of the Lord is passing by.

For Older Pupils. After describing a scene that she had witnessed in a poor quarter of London, of ill-clad, semi-starved people collected about a huckster's cart where decaying vegetables were being auctioned off, Miss Jane Addams added: "The final impression was not of ragged clothes or pinched faces, but of myriads of hands, empty, pathetic, nerveless and work-worn, showing white in the uncertain light of the street, and clutching forward for food that was already unfit to eat. I have never since been able to see a number of hands held upward, even when they are moving rhythmically in a calisthenic exercise, or when they belong to a class of chubby children who wave them

eagerly in response to a teacher's query, without a certain revival of this memory, a clutching at the heart that is but reminiscent of the despair and resentment that seized me then." Miss Addams' deep feeling of compassion for the suffering resembles our Saviour's when he walked about the streets of Capernaum two thousand years ago and beseeching hands were held out to him for aid. All the hospitals, asylums, orphanages in our land are built, all the deeds of our great-hearted philanthropists like Miss Addams, are done, because Jesus Christ went about doing good and teaching all the world to follow his example.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Going About Doing Good

The Meaning of the Miracles. Matthew in recounting Jesus' many deeds of mercy on that busy day in Capernaum, explains that sympathy was the ruling motive, for he saw in them a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy,—Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases. For the individual people of that city the important fact was their healing, but for every one since that time the fact that matters is the proof his ministries give of his intensely sympathetic heart, his readiness to take upon himself the burden of suffering humanity. In that he himself was tempted he is able now to help those that are tempted, we read, and just as true is it that in that he himself suffered because of the burdens and sins of others, so he is able now to help the burdened and the suffering.

He went about Doing Good. "Have you ever noticed," questions Professor Henry Drummond, "how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things —in merely doing kind things? Run it over with that in view, and you will find that he spent a great proportion of his time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people."

Probably most people will do a good turn to others if the occasion is lying in their path so that they can not possibly help seeing it, can not avoid doing it without going out of their way not to do it, but not all people, even the best-natured ones, go around with eyes wide open looking for the chance to do some one a good turn. During all his life Jesus went about doing good to all, for he was the most brotherly of all the sons of men. He went about not doing wonders all the time, as Bishop McDowell explains, but doing good all the time, and that was a wonder itself. And then Dr. McDowell adds: A certain famous teacher in one of our colleges has died within a few years. The last time I visited the college they told me that he visited all the sick, all the troubled, all the poor in the community, being the most useful man in the small town, and that he seemed to think it belonged to him as a teacher of Greek to do such things. Our Master was always like that. He evidently meant to be so. It was not an accident nor an incident in his life. His daily life was rich in deeds of mercy and love.

A Young Man who went about Doing Good. Bishop John F. Berry tells of an incident he witnessed in a railroad train. A little old woman was on the express and when the conductor saw her ticket he said in a coarse, loud voice: "What are you doing on this train? We don't stop at your town. No stops till we get to Scranton. Guess you haven't travelled much, old woman. Next time you go away from home you'd better take some one along to take care of you. We'll take you on to Scranton and you can get back to-night, some time!" The little woman was thoroughly frightened, till a young man across the aisle, perhaps eighteen years of age, crossed over and asked permission to sit by her and explain. He himself had got on the wrong train twice, people often did, and it was not so bad as the conductor said, for he knew that in only an hour after they reached Scranton another train would take her back to her destination. Then he began talking about other things to relieve her mind, and after he had made her forget her troubles in a good laugh he resumed his seat. Bishop Berry had heard it all, and becoming intensely interested in the lad went over to him and asked why it was that he had taken so much pains to comfort that lonely stranger in her distress. This is what the young man told him, after much hesitation: "I was glad of a chance to cheer her up. My life up to about eight months ago was a selfish life. My ambition was simply to have a

good time. But my Master showed me that that was a small, mean way to live, and I promised that if he would help me, I would never again let a day pass that I did not try to do at least one little service for him. When I heard the conductor talking so roughly to the poor old soul, and saw how frightened and worried she was, I said to myself: 'Good enough! There's my chance.' So I just went over and smoothed her down for Jesus' sake."

I have heard many sermons on Christian consecration and Christian service, added Bishop Berry, but I never heard such a sermon as that preached to me by the lad on the railroad that day. It was not an act prompted by mere pity. It was not a service that had its limits in humanitarian endeavor. No, no. "I went over and smoothed her down for Jesus' sake."

II The Friendly Touch

Jesus and the Leper. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," cried the leper. He had seen Jesus heal others and believed that the great Physician had the power to heal him; he doubted, however, whether he had the will. The rabbis all shrank from him with loathing, would not this great Rabbi shrink back also? And then Jesus in his great compassion put his hand upon the poor outcast as he said: I will; be thou made clean.

When Jesus restored Peter's mother-in-law to health he took her by the hand and raised her up. When he brought sight to blind eyes and cured the child with the dumb spirit, he took each helpless one by the hand. His touch had power. "His grasp meant sympathy, tenderness, identification of himself with us, the communication of upholding, restoring strength. It is a picture, in a small matter, of the very heart of the gospel."

The Gospel of Love in a Touch. Men know the man who loves them. Dull as they may be, they are able to discern the difference, believe me, between the man who serves them for obligation and the man who serves them for love. The miraculous ministry is always the loving ministry. "I could tell you," said a friend of Father Dolling, "of miracles of healing that have been wrought by Dolling." And then he goes on to give an instance of how a young soldier said to him, "Father Dolling laid his hand upon my head, and I don't know why, but I told all that I had ever done." Ah! but we know why. We know that there is often more of the Gospel of love in a touch, in a glance, in a hand-grasp, than there is in many a sermon. *W. J. Dawson, Evangelistic Note.*

The Lesson for Christian Workers. Wherever men would help their fellows, this is a prime requisite, that the would-be helper should come down to the level of those whom he desires to aid. It is of no use to stand at the mouth of the alley we wish to cleanse, with our skirts daintily gathered about us, and smelling-bottle in hand, to preach homilies on the virtues of cleanliness. We must go in among the filth, and handle it, if we want to have it cleared away. The degraded must feel that we do not shrink from them.

Even in regard to common material helps the principle holds good. We are too apt to cast our doles to the poor like bones to a dog, and then to wonder at what we are pleased to think men's ingratitude. The effect of much well-meant Christian effort is simply to irritate. People are very quick to catch delicate intonations which reveal a secret sense of "how much better, wiser, more devout I am than these people!" and wherever a trace of that appears in our work, the good of it is apt to be marred.

We cannot lecture men into the love of Christ. We can win them to it only by showing Christ's love to them; and not the least important element in that process is the exhibition of our own love. Condensed from the *Gospel of St. Mark*, by *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

III Missionary Topic Leper Missions

Lepers of India. In India there are twenty thousand lepers being cared for by the Government and mission asylums, but the total number of lepers according to the last census was ninety-seven thousand. A Lepers' Act is enforced in some provinces, which compels lepers to go to some asylum, but many Indian policemen would not arrest a leper for fear of losing caste by touching him. Miss Annie E. Kemp, who has charge of a leper asylum on the borders

of Nepal and Tibet, tells of a leper who had been thrust "without the camp" and had taken refuge in a hut just beyond the village. The elders of the village in council decided that they would set the hut on fire, and then surround it, and should the leper attempt to escape thrust him back with long sticks. Fortunately an old woman gave him warning in time to make his escape to an asylum. "Service among the lepers is the gladdest work in the world, in spite of the loathsomeness of the disease and of the difficulties of the work," writes Miss Kemp in a letter published in an English paper. "There is no service more full of joy than that which results in the transformation of these sad and hopeless sufferers into glad and hopeful men and women, through the power of the Holy Spirit."

The Death of a Leper. The leper missions of the Christian world are not few in number, and they represent the charity of many denominations. To these homes in India, China, Persia, Syria and the Hawaiian Islands have gone brave men and women, who have risked their lives that they might bring the sympathy of a Christian world to a class whose misery always appealed to the sympathy of Christ.

Travellers in the Orient say that it is difficult to maintain sympathy for the lepers. The unfortunate trade in their misfortune and the fear which it evokes. They await the traveller where the road ascends the hill to a city, and hobbling beside his tired horse, thrust their stumps of fingers into the tourist's face and shout their plaintive, querulous, insistent cry, "Lipra! lipra!" The tourist flings small coin behind him in the road, and while the lepers scramble for the money, whips up his horse, wondering that Christ could ever have pitied a leper.

The leper homes could tell many a story of disappointment and ingratitude, for the lepers chafe under restrictions, and often enter the homes only that they may have shelter in cold weather, and roam and beg when the weather is warm. But there are also tales of heroic self-denial, and of a gratitude that touches every heart that knows of it.

From one of these homes in Hiao-Kan, China, came, not long ago, a report of the recent death of an inmate who for years had been a blessing to the mission. When he knew that the time of his death was near, he asked permission to visit his old home, and, accepting the reluctantly granted permission, set out on his journey.

His limbs were diseased, his lungs were nearly destroyed, the sight of one eye was gone, but he made the journey, told his heathen friends of the joy which his religion afforded, took leave of them all, and returned to the mission at Hiao-Kan to die.

He had barely strength to get back, and when he arrived, lived but a few hours. His poor, thin, disease-ravaged face had a light which seemed the reflection of heaven, and he told of his three weeks' journey with a note of triumph. It had been a pilgrimage of faith, and the joy of his message had comforted every painful, limping step. He had borne his testimony to the faith that makes men strong to suffer and brave to die, and he was ready to be offered up. *Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Unless the fishers of men heal and pity, as well as teach and preach, they do not really "come after Christ." *R. F. Horton.*

We shall be so kind in the afterwhile,
But what have we been to-day?
We shall bring to each lonely life a smile,
But what have we brought to-day? *Nixon Waterman.*

We've no business to die till we can leave the world a little better for our having lived in it. *Margaret Deland.*

It is possible for selfish persons to love, but it is not possible for them to feel genuine sympathy, for it is an absolutely unselfish quality. *Rufus M. Jones.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

It's a great thing, O my brethren, for a fellow just to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a friendly sort of way! *Riley.*

This morning a collector for an Orphan Asylum called and narrated some of her experiences. She had just come from a house where at the door she had asked the little colored maid to give her book to her mistress and see if she wished to contribute anything. "Oh, it's no use at all," the maid replied: "she don't give nothing to nobody." Is it possible that this is your maid's opinion of your habit of doing good?

Cultivate this finest of all fine arts, the art of doing good. In the words of Whittier—

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of him whose holy work was "doing good;"
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

Leaving the synagogue, where he had preached and had restored the poor demoniac to sanity, Jesus returned home to the house of Peter to find all alarmed over the high fever of Peter's mother-in-law. They appealed to Jesus and not in vain, for he took the sick woman by the hand and lifted her up, the fever left her, and she rose and ministered unto them.

The fame of Jesus' deeds spread, and when the sun was set and the Sabbath over, "all the city was gathered together at the door," Mark says in his graphic way, for the sick were brought to him and were not disappointed, for he healed them all.

And very early in the morning following, before the city was astir, Jesus went out to a lonely place to pray, but even there he could find no solitude for Peter and the other disciples followed to tell him that all were seeking him. "Let us go to the nearby towns that I may preach there also, for this is my mission." And in the synagogues throughout Galilee he preached and cast out demons.

One day a leper came and knelt before him saying, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." With infinite compassion Jesus touched the loathsome sufferer and said, "It is my will: be clean," and the leprosy left him. Jesus bade him go at once and secure the testimony of the priests to his restoration and make the offering required by law, but instead the man spread the news far and wide so that Jesus was obliged to leave the city. Even in his desert retreats they came to him from all the regions round.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The drawing-power of Christ. All are seeking thee.
2. The duty of the church toward the sick and suffering. See the Religion of Service, *Outlook,* Nov. 19, '10; Great Modern Hospital, *Century,* Nov., '10.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Read the account of the healing of the paralytic in all three Synoptic Gospels. (Mt. 9.1-13; Mk. 2.1-12; Lk. 5.18-26.) 2. How did the men with their burden reach the roof? How did they get the sick man before Jesus? (Clipping, p. 122.) 3. On what other occasions did Jesus show that he read men's thoughts? (Lk. 6.8; 9.47; Mk. 12.15; Jn. 2.24; 4.29.) 4. What is blasphemy? (Dictionary.) 5. What similar miracle does John record which gave rise to the charge of blasphemy? (Jn. 5.18.) 6. How did Palestine become a part of Rome? (Clipping, p. 23.) 7. When did Herod the Great become ruler? (Clipping, p. 23.) 8. What do you know about this Herod? (Clipping, p. 23.)

Questions to think about. 1. What does "borne of four," verse 3, mean? 2. What word of Jesus shows why these men were so persistent in getting the palsied man before him? 3. How much trouble do you take for your friends? 4. Explain the reasoning in verses 9-12. 5. What sort of bed was it that the man took up? (Clipping, p. 122.) 6. What does John 10.30 tell us as to the explanation of the fact that Jesus' words were not blasphemy? 7. Is there any one who does not need to have sins forgiven?

Note Book Work. Continue the work undertaken for the year.

THE PARALYTIC FORGIVEN AND HEALED

Golden Text

Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases. Ps. 103.2, 3

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 2.1-12. The Paralytic Forgiven and Healed. **T.** Acts 3.1-10. A Beggar Healed. **W.** Ps. 25.1-18. Prayer for Pardon. **T.** Ps. 103.1-12. Forgiveness and Healing. **F.** Isa. 43.18-25. Blotting Out of Transgressions. **S.** 1 John 1.1-10. Perfect Cleansing. **S.** Jas. 5.13-20. Prayer for the Sick. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 2.1-12 READ Luke 5.18-26; Mt. 9.1-8 COMMIT vv 9-11

1 And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days it was noised
that he was in the house. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there
was no longer room *for them,* no, not even about the door: and he spake the
word unto them. 3 And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the
palsy, borne of four. 4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the
crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it
up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. 5 And Jesus seeing
their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven. 6 But
there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts. 7
Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one,
even God? 8 And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so rea-
soned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your
hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are for-
given: or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? 10 But that ye may
know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to
the sick of the palsy), 11 I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto
thy house. 12 And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth
before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying,
We never saw it on this fashion.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *Capernaum.* Called *his own city* in Mt. 9.1.—*After some days.* After the events of our last lesson.—*Noised.* Reported. Jesus had tried to avoid publicity.—*In the house.* Or, *at home,* RVm. The house was probably Peter's. For description of an oriental house of the better class, see page 122.

3-4. *Sick of the palsy.* A paralytic.—*Borne of four.* Carried by four men.—*Come nigh unto him.* Many ancient authorities read *bring him unto him,* RVm. —*For.* Because of.—*Uncovered...broken it up.* They let him down through the tiles, Lk. 5.19. See page 122.—*Bed.* Or, *pallet,* RVm.

5-6. *Their faith.* The faith of the four friends.—*Son.* Greek, *child,* RVm.—*Thy sins are forgiven.* Mt. (9.2) reads *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven.* The common belief of the Jews that all disease was the result of sin, Jesus denied in Jn. 9.2.—*Reasoning in their hearts.* The Greek διαλογιζόμενοι means literally *they started a dialogue with themselves.*

7-8. *He blasphemeth.* To *blaspheme* means primarily to speak evil against God; here the Jews accused Jesus of treating God impiously by claiming a prerogative that belonged only to God. If Jesus was not himself divine his claim was blasphemous. By claiming the right to exercise the divine prerogative, he claimed to be God.—*Perceiving in his spirit.* Note that Jesus read the

hearts of these men, just as he read the hearts of the four friends of the sick man, verse 5.

9. *Which is easier.* An imposter could say that a man's sins were forgiven, and there would be no proof forthcoming of his imposture, but if he bade a palsied man arise and walk the proof of his powerlessness would at once be shown. "Thus, to use a familiar illustration of our Lord's argument, it would be easier for a man, equally ignorant of French and Chinese, to claim to know the latter than the former; not that the language itself is easier, but that, in the one case, multitudes could disprove his claim; and in the other, hardly a scholar or two in the land" (*Trench*).

10. *That ye may know.* That he had the power to forgive sins he could not prove on the spot, but that he had the power to cure disease he could at once demonstrate; as Zigabenus said, He made the visible power a testimony of the invisible.—*Authority.* Power, AV: the Greek ἐξουσία means primarily *permission;* in Jn. 19.10, as here, it includes the ideas of both authority and power.

12. *Went forth.* Glorifying God, Lk. 5.25.—*They all.* Among them were Pharisees and doctors of the law, Lk. 5.17.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Jesus saith unto the sick of the palsy.* What will Jesus say? It is a great moment, as these two men silently confront each other, the living embodiment of Helplessness and Power. The eyes of all are riveted on Jesus—the people with curious expectancy, the four friends with beating hearts and desperate hopes, the scribes with a scowl upon their faces and hate in their hearts.

What will Jesus say? He was deeply cheered by the faith the friends had shown, and he would not let such faith go away disappointed. So, turning to the helpless man upon the couch, he said, "Courage, child." He said more, but he began by saying that. And we can imagine how these two simple words, each in its own way, began to touch the springs of life and hope in the wasted body before him. The man, if a great sinner, may have been accustomed to words of reproach, or to that cold and shallow consolation which stings more keenly than reproach; and now he is told to take heart again. Here is One who speaks to him as if he believed in the possibility of his physical and spiritual recovery, One who appeals to his slumbering hope and heroism. And so tender an appeal, too! He calls him "Child." Many a year had passed since he had been anybody's "child;" and the tenderness of the Speaker, no less than his first great, authoritative word, goes to the heart of the unhappy man. His inner world is transformed; a new life courses through his veins, and it will not be long till he will be upon his feet, and going upon his way rejoicing. In the presence of this mysterious One, who speaks to him hopefully, who bids him be brave, who assures him of the forgiveness of sins, and who calls him Child, old things are passed away, and a new day has dawned. *John Edgar McFadyen,* in *The City with Foundations.*

11 *Take up thy bed.* Why was he to take up his bed? Because, as some one has beautifully said, there is to be no provision made for the relapse. Oh, how many of us have made that provision in the past! Yes, we will get up, but we will have the bed ready for the relapse. So far as you are able, make it impossible, by the absoluteness of your surrender and consecration, ever to get back. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *They come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy.* A medical missionary in India says that the road between his bungalow and the hospital is often blocked by the sick brought there for him to heal. As he hastens out at night to answer an urgent call he stumbles over a figure lying in his doorway, and all along his way other sufferers have been left to await his coming. Many come to him from a distance of several hundreds of miles, and expect him to cure in one day a long-standing disease.

4. *They uncovered the roof and when they had broken it up.* The crowd may have filled the central courtyard, and Jesus may have spoken to them from

the gallery or veranda that extended along the wall of the house; in that case it was the tiles of the veranda that were removed. A poorer house would have no central court, it would be only a single room, and would be built of sun-dried bricks or of clay. An outside stairway would lead to the roof, where in warm weather the family slept. The roof could be easily opened or "dug through." It was almost flat, sloping just enough to let the rain run off. "A composition of mortar, tar, ashes and sand was spread upon the roof and rolled hard. Sometimes stone slabs were laid across the joists, and then they would be forced not only to dig through the earth but also to pry up the tiles."

4. *They let down the bed.* The bed was but a mattress or padded quilt, and as the roof was low the four men could hold on to the corners and by stooping down could let down the sick man without the aid of ropes as are represented in most pictures of the scene. Probably in bringing the man the bearers carried him upon a board or stretcher on which his quilt or mattress was thrown.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

It was "some days" after the events recorded in our last lesson that the paralytic was brought to Jesus. There were Pharisees present (Lk. 5.21) who may have come from Jerusalem for the express purpose of finding wherewith to accuse Jesus, for their hostility had been aroused by his cleansing of the temple and other deeds during his early Judean ministry.

The place of the lesson is a house in Capernaum. See the last lesson. Assign paragraphs 155-157 and 30-31, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

In the days about which we are studying there came four men one day to Jesus bearing a heavy burden. What were they carrying? Why were they bringing a man to Jesus? What made them believe that Jesus could cure him? After reviewing briefly last Sunday's lesson, describe the "bed" on which the man was carried (see above), and picture the scene about the door. Straight ahead was the way to the great Physician, but it was blocked. What could the men do?

Once upon a time a bee was buzzing up and down on the inside of a high window, now bouncing against the glass, now dashing against the near-by wall, and then resting a moment on the window-sill. Then along came a fly who said to the bee: "What are you trying to do? Don't you know that you can't make your way through glass? But if you will turn away from the glass and fly over in that direction, you will find an open door through which you can quickly go. Just follow me and I will show you the way." "But I can see the flowers right before me," returned the bee; "I don't want to go away from them; of course this is the way, straight ahead, and I am going to get to them through here." The next morning the fly came in again and found the bee lying on the window sill, having dashed itself to death.

These men, unlike that bee, did not keep on trying to go straight ahead; they knew they could not make their way through that mass of people. But they did not give up their hope of getting their sick friend to Jesus. They turned about and tried another way. Describe an oriental house, outside stairway, roof, and the way those friends tore up the roof and let the sufferer down at the very feet of Jesus (See above). Show Tissot's picture No. 44. Then adapt for your use the thoughts of Topic I, especially "Take hold of hands," page 124.

In telling the remainder of the story omit all reference to blasphemy, merely telling your class that the scribes did not believe that Jesus had power to forgive sins, that Jesus read their thoughts, and showed by his power to cure the man that his claim that he could forgive sins was true.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, John the Baptist had cried. "'I paint,' cried Raphael. 'I build,' was the boast of Michael Angelo. 'I rule,' cried Cæsar. 'I sing,' cried Homer. 'I

conquer,' cried Alexander. 'I seek and save,' cried Jesus Christ. This is the glory of the Master and of his Gospel." We have studied a day in Jesus' life that was given up to deeds of healing. Jesus went about doing good, and his miracles of bodily healing were but signs of his higher power of spiritual healing; he was called Jesus "for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." To-day's lesson shows this glory of the Master, his power to save us from sin.

For Older Pupils. As patients are carried into a certain hospital in the East, or are helped up its steps by friends, they may see a broad marble slab on which is written in letters of gold, Have faith in God. Within its walls human knowledge and skill do what they can to restore the sufferers to health and strength, but they could accomplish nothing without those healing forces which are divine. Long years ago a poor sufferer was brought to the great Physician by friends who had faith in his healing power.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Four-cornered Services

Borne of Four. It often needs several friendly hands to bring a needy one to Jesus. One man alone could not have put that paralytic down in front of the Saviour, but four working together accomplished the difficult task. You recall the case of the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda. When Jesus asked him, "Wouldest thou be made whole?" the man who had been afflicted for thirty and eight years replied: "I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." He was helpless, because he was not borne of four.

Note the faith of that ambulance corps; they believed that Jesus could and would cure their friend, but they did not sit down afar and await his coming. They exerted their own efforts to the utmost to bring him to the Christ. Trust in nothing but in Providence and your own efforts: never separate the two, counsels Dickens. These men did not separate the two.

Note the persistence of the four. They might well have been discouraged in finding a crowd so great and selfish, no room even about the door and no one willing to make room, and they might have told the sick man that they had done all they could to bring him to Jesus, but they could not do the impossible, and then they might have taken him back home with a virtuous feeling in their hearts that they had done all that could be expected of them. But they were of those men whom Stanley says relish a task for its bigness and greet hard labor with a fierce joy. No crowd could turn them back. They did the seemingly impossible thing. All great things ever done were once deemed impossible.

Note their resourcefulness. If they could not get the sick man before Jesus by the ordinary way they could by an extraordinary way. They were determined to find a way or make it. That is the spirit that "arrives." Great men never wait for opportunities; they make them. Bunyan had no writing paper in jail, but he untwisted the stoppers of the milk bottles and wrote his Pilgrim's Progress upon them. Faith is full of inventions. Cannot faith invent and reach by some new means the outcasts who lie perishing around us? questions Spurgeon. Have we felt Christ's healing power in our own lives? If so, then, through door, through window, or through roof, let us break through all impediments, labor to bring poor souls to Jesus.

Team Play. In games he who fights solely for his own hand soon becomes isolated from his fellows, and is despised even for his very powers. Team play is the really valuable lesson that compensates for that modern game, the team play is the great lesson of life—each man learning to know and to act on the maxim that no one liveth to himself. A good player will, as I have seen more than one do, pass the ball to a comrade, who is sure to score, right in front of goal, when it meant the certain loss of his chance of handing his own name down to posterity as having scored the winning point himself. His share in the transaction will be shortly forgotten, possibly will never be recognized. But honor will come to his college, his *alma mater*, to something bigger and more enduring than his own poor life. *Dr. W. T. Grenfell*, in *A Man's Helpers*.

Take Hold of Hands. You know something of the wonders of electricity;

and that it runs on the wires that are stretched for it, though nobody can quite understand how. And you know that it likes to run along the muscles and nerves of our bodies, as well as on a wire so that when people take hold of hands in a circle and one of them touches an electric wire, they all feel a shock.

When I was a boy at school we used to have great fun with an experiment. Our teacher had a little electric battery, made just to amuse the boys and girls and not strong enough to hurt anybody. We boys would all form a circle and join hands, while those next to the battery would grasp the handles on the ends of the wire. It was great fun to feel the shock,—a kind of tingling sensation that made us all say "Ouch!" Sometimes it would hurt just a little; but it was fun all the same.

One day we made the circle and the boys nearest the battery took hold of the handles, and everybody waited to see everybody else jump. But nobody jumped and nobody said "Ouch!" The teacher wondered why. But as she looked around the circle she saw that two of the boys hadn't taken hold of hands. Then she understood; for if the circle is broken, the electric current refuses to perform. "Why don't you take hold of each other's hands?" she asked. And the boys said, "Oh, we don't like each other!" That just spoiled it! Two boys wouldn't take hold of hands, because they didn't like each other. Even electricity, smart as it is, couldn't jump across that gap in the circle.

You know there are many things which can be done only when people take hold of hands. It is so in the family, in the school, and in the church; a great many things we have to do together, and we must join hands to do them. And often when things don't go right, it is just because somebody hasn't taken hold of hands. Somebody doesn't like somebody else! And what do you think ought to be done about it? *Frank T. Bayley,* in *Little Ten Minutes.*

A Missionary Thought. Those four men saw something in this paralytic worth saving, they overcame all obstacles in order to bring him to Jesus. They were actuated by a great love for the man and a great faith in the Physician. If we care enough for the heathen, and have faith enough in the Healer of souls, we shall be persistent, untiring, in our efforts to bring them to him.

II Modern Miracles

Rise up and Walk. The winter had been a hard one. Long-continued financial depression had reduced the ability of people to give, and at the same time had increased the frequency of the calls for money. The minister was troubled. He feared lest people should dread to come to church on account of the constant appeals for aid, yet on the other hand there was a great and growing need. One Sunday morning he gave out the notices for the week, and then, after a pause, continued, "I have said to myself a dozen times of late that I would bring to you no special appeals, no matter how pressing, for our regular charities must be maintained, and many of you are already overburdened.

"I am not willing that you should think me unmindful of the burdens you are bearing, or heedlessly insistent in pressing other claims upon your benevolence. But I have just received an appeal, signed by the secretary of our local board of charities, calling attention to the case of a poor boy in the village of Millburn. Two years ago he lost both of his feet by freezing. He has been abused all his life, and since his misfortune he has been treated with added inhumanity by his parents. At last he has been sent to the almshouse to protect him from those who should be his protectors. If he had artificial feet he could become self-supporting; as it is, the only way in which he can move is by creeping on his hands and knees.

"My brethren, I ask you to work a modern miracle. The Gospel of Christ is given to men that they may be lifted up and made to stand erect. Let us put this young man on his feet. That day when Peter found a man at the temple gate, lame and unable to walk, he said to him, 'Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!'

"This boy whom we have never seen sits at our temple door to-day. With us is the God-given power of helping him. Let us say to him, 'Silver and gold

have we, one hundred dollars; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!'"

Then came the sermon, and after that the closing hymn and benediction, and the morning was blessed to many a man because of his purpose to help in so good a work.

The minister and his hearers were right. It was not from their own point of view that they had spoken, but from that of the cripple. They had lifted him up and made him to walk erect. To him, at least, the deed was in very truth a miracle. And here is the thought for every giver in the name of Christ to keep in his heart—not "What does this gift mean to me?" but "What does it mean to the suffering brother to whom I give it?" It is a thought that will work other miracles. *Youth's Companion.*

Medical Missions. Medical missionaries of to-day can not perform miracles and heal instantly, but they perform many gradual cures that seem no less than miraculous to the people. At Tiberias, in the very region where Jesus went about doing good and healing all that were brought to him for cure, there is a medical mission known as "The Sea of Galilee Mission."

"Medicine has been the magic key which has opened every door of fanaticism, bigotry and opposition," writes a missionary in Persia. "The native people have seen the lame carried into our hospitals and go out walking. They have seen the blind led in and go out seeing."

III The Power of Jesus to Forgive Sin

The Divine Prerogative. While Jesus was ever ready to heal the body, his great mission was to heal the spirit. When the palsied man was brought to him his compassion was aroused, not so much for the diseased body as for the sin-sick spirit. Many see in this man a case of disease produced by sin, but that is not necessarily implied by the narrative. Jesus could read the heart, and he knew that this man like all humanity was a sinner needing forgiveness. Sinners he had come to call to repentance, sin he had come to cure.

Only God can forgive sin, for (I quote Dr. Maclaren) sin is the name of evil, when considered in its relation to God. He only can forgive it, for "against thee, thee only," as David confessed, is it committed. True, the same act may be full of harmful results to men, and may be a breach of human law, but in its character as sin it refers to God only. Forgiveness is the outpouring of God's love on a sinner, uninterrupted by his sin. Only God can pour out that love. And Jesus is the Son of God. He did not "blaspheme." He had power to forgive sins.

Go and sin no more. Jake Parsons had led a life of extreme dissipation. One night he went to bed a drunken wretch and the next morning awoke to lead a life that was beyond criticism for forty years. Dr. James H. Taylor gives us Jake Parsons' own account of the transformation. "That night Jesus Christ appeared in my sleep. His face, as I saw it, seemed so pure, so lovely, and so friendly to me that when I awoke I forgot my old vices, and so loved my Saviour that I could not displease him. He did not speak to me, he only looked at me; but his look told me that there was hope for me, that I could be forgiven, I could be purified. I looked at him and cried like a child; I felt that I was a vile, miserable, wicked wretch. When I looked at him I was too happy to be afraid; and when I looked at myself I was too afraid to be happy. I forgot all about rum and tobacco, I was thinking so much about Christ, he was all heaven, all grace and beauty."

Evidences of Christ's Power To-day. Everywhere we look, we see that power at work to-day. At a crowded meeting held in a large New York church the superintendent of the Rescue Mission, a tall, fine-looking man, was asked to speak. He told of the growth of the Mission and of the work it tried to do, and then he closed with these words: "I was asked to-day as I came into this church, 'Have you ever seen a bad man become a good man?' Yes, my friends, I have. Sixteen years ago a man was leaning against a beer-barrel in a saloon in New York. His coat was in tatters. His shoes would hardly hold together. He had not a cent in his pocket or a friend in the world. He had broken his mother's heart, he had deserted his wife. No door was open to him

—not even that of the hospital, for he was not sick; nor that of the morgue, for he was not dead.

Some one in the saloon said to him, "You'd better go up to Forty-third Street. There's a mission up there that you might work for a night's lodging." The man went, and reeled into the mission half-drunk. Before he went out again, twenty-four hours later, he had got hold of a hand that helped him to his feet. He had heard words of hope—of him who came to seek not the righteous, but sinners. He had taken new heart, and begun a new upward climb. All that was sixteen years ago. Some of you know that man to-day. All of you have heard him speak."

Then as the superintendent sat down the great audience realized that they had been told the result of Christ's forgiving power in the life of that superintendent himself, Samuel H. Hadley.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Every noble work is at first impossible. *Carlyle.*

When thou seest misery in thy brother's face, let him see mercy in thine eye. *Quarles.*

A healthy body is good; but a soul in right health—it is the thing beyond all others to be prayed for. *Carlyle.*

Jesus' philanthropies are but mirrors of his larger and more lasting ministries to the souls of men. *J. Stuart Holden.*

How do I know he's the living God?
In corruption of sin I lay dead;
But Life Everlasting thrilled into me, when—
"Thy sins be forgiven!" he said. *Robert J. Burdette.*

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Ps. 32.1.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 1 Tim. 1.15.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

If we can not do helpful things for others alone, let us lend a hand to help with others.

All who saw the pardoned palsied man arise and walk were amazed; not all who are amazed at Christ's power avail themselves of Christ's pardon.

What does it matter that you believe in the forgiveness of sins, so long as you do not care a rush whether you are pardoned or not? *Alexander Maclaren.*

Follow the counsel of Lowell and

Look inward through the depths of thine own soul:
How is it with thee? art thou sound and whole?

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

Greatly astonished must have been that company of people who crowded a house in Capernaum one day. They were listening to the words of Jesus when suddenly the roof overhead was opened and a palsied man lying upon his mattress-bed was let down before him. The crowd had not moved to let the sufferer in through the doorway, the four determined friends who carried him had taken him up the outside stairway to the roof, and in this unusual way had succeeded in getting him to the Great Physician. Jesus saw the faith of these friends and said to the sick man: "Son, your sins are forgiven." At once the scribes present said in their hearts: "What blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins." As Jesus had read the hearts of the sick man and his friends, so he now read the hearts of his enemies. "Which is the easier, to say to the palsied man 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise and walk?'" questioned Jesus. Any one could say the former, for there could be no proof of his power, but he who said the latter must have his power put to the test. Jesus would prove his power over disease and therefore his power over sin, and he

turned to the sick man and said: "Arise, take up your bed and go home." At once the palsied man obeyed. Then in amazement the people glorified God saying, "Never before have we seen such proof of power."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Vicarious Faith.

2. Religious Selfishness. The hearers of Christ were so anxious to get every word that fell from his lips that they shoved the invalid out of the way that they themselves might hear the better. The picture is typical. It is well enough to seek for ourselves the highest advantages of Christian worship, to pay heavily for costliest architecture and religious luxuries, but the spectacle of a church paying ten dollars for itself where it pays one for aggressive outside work is calculated to call to mind the gospel scene where every man's very eagerness to hear eclipsed in him the real spirit of Christian unselfishness. *Dr. Francis J. McConnell,* in *The Bible Student's Magazine.*

3. The Lesson for the Social Reformer that there is the deeper moral and spiritual problem back of the social problem. Well says Dr. W. B. Selbie in "Aspects of Christ," "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee;" that comes first. And our social reformers must learn to take things in their proper order. Many of them by this time are tired of tinkering with the outside. Those who have ever tried to regenerate a sunken human being, some miserable drunkard or wastrel, know what this means. They put him into a clean house and into clean clothes and give him a fresh job, and they know, to their sorrow, what the end of it is. The work goes on over and over again, until they are sick, and weary, and in despair. What is needed is a new man, as well as a new environment; and the thing Jesus Christ is insisting upon with every one who listens to his word is that we must begin with the new man first, and be radical in our treatment of the problem, if we are to make any change.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What was Levi's other name? (Mt. 9.9.) 2. What do we know about Matthew from the Gospel records? (Just the one incident in our lesson; told also in Mt. 9.9 and Lk. 3.27.) 3. What was a publican? (See foot-note in R. V.) 4. How was a publican regarded? (Lk. 19.2, 7; Clipping, p. 129.) 5. Give an account of the way Roman taxes were levied. (Clipping, p. 129.) 7. What prophecy did Jesus quote in connection with the words of our Golden Text, as told by Matthew? (Mt. 9.13.) 8. Who had called Jesus the bridegroom? (Jn. 3.29.) 9. How were wineskins prepared? (Clipping, p. 130.) 10. How was Herod's kingdom divided on his death? (Clipping, p. 24.) 11. Who was Herod Antipas and what is told about him in the Gospels? (Clipping, p. 24.) 12. What are the Apocryphal Books? (Clipping, p. 25.) 13. Which of the Apocryphal Books give the history of the times between the two Testaments? (Clipping, p. 25.)

Questions to think about. 1. Which of the twelve apostles had already been especially called to follow Jesus? 2. What had the four earlier-called disciples left to follow Jesus? 3. What did Matthew leave? 4. Can you give a reason for believing that Matthew made the greater sacrifice? (He must have been very fond of money or he, a Jew, would never have become the tax-collector to be despised by all his countrymen.) 5. What do we owe to Matthew? 6. Why should we gladly pay taxes? 7. What picture did Jesus paint which shows that God's heart is more responsive to a penitent publican than to a self-satisfied Pharisee? (Parable of the Pharisee and Publican.) 8. Why did the scribes and Pharisees go to the disciples and complain about their Master instead of going to Jesus himself? 9. Why did they complain to Jesus about his disciples not fasting instead of finding fault with the disciples themselves? 10. What had been the Baptist's custom regarding food and social life?

Note Book Work. Continue the work undertaken for the year. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17 of the Introduction.

LESSON XII—MARCH 24

FEASTING AND FASTING

Golden Text

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. Mark 2.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 2.13-22. Feasting and Fasting. **T.** Matt. 4.12-22. Call to Service. **W.** Luke 19.1-10. A Publican Called. **T.** Isa. 58.1-11. True Fasting. **F.** Matt. 22.1-14. The Marriage Feast. **S.** 1 Tim. 1.12-17. Chief of Sinners. **S.** Luke 5.33-39. Gospel Feasting. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON MARK 2.13-22 READ Mt. 9.9-17; Luke 5.27-39 COMMIT vv 16, 17

13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted
unto him, and he taught them. 14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son*
of Alphæus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And
he arose and followed him.
15 And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many
publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were
many, and they followed him. 16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they
saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples,
How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? 17 And when
Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a
physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.
18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: and they come and
say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast,
but thy disciples fast not? 19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the
bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have
the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when
the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that
day. 21 No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else
that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse
rent is made. 22 And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the
wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but *they put*
new wine into fresh wine-skins.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

13-14. *He went forth again by the seaside.* The Sea of Galilee. An earlier departure is mentioned in 1.35. See the Geographical Background.—*He taught them.* "Our Lord taught the people in field-meetings, house-meetings, mountain-meetings, ship-meetings, synagogue-meetings, and temple-meetings" (*Richard Baxter*).—*Levi.* In the first Gospel instead of "Levi, son of Alphæus," we have "a man called Matthew." Matthew may have been his second name, or he may have chosen this name which means "Gift of Jehovah" after his call.—*At the place of toll.* A toll, or tax, was levied on articles imported or exported from or to another district. Here the toll was obtained from the caravans that passed through Capernaum on their way to Damascus or Egypt for goods carried or for the use of the paved highway.—*He arose and followed him.* He forsook all, and rose up and followed him, Lk. 5.27.

15. *Sitting at meat.* See Light from Oriental Life.—*His house.* Matthew's house, according to Lk. 5.29.—*Publicans.* That is, collectors or renters of Roman taxes, RVm.

16. *Of the Pharisees.* Some ancient authorities read *and the Pharisees.* See

p. 22.—*When they saw.* They were not themselves guests but spectators in the court where the feast was probably held. See Light from Oriental Life.—*Your master.* They would make the disciples disaffected toward Jesus.—*And drinketh.* Some ancient authorities omit these words, RVm.

17. *They that are whole.* Greek, *strong,* RVm. The Pharisees deemed themselves whole. Our words *whole, hale, health,* all come from the one Anglo-Saxon word *hal.*—*Physician.* Literally, *a healer.* The force of this argument is, of course, that as the physician labors among the sick, so the Physician of souls must labor among sinners.

18. *John's disciples.* The disciples of John the Baptist, who was now in prison.—*Were fasting.* Perhaps the time is the day of Levi's feast. Two fast days a week were observed by the Pharisees, Lk. 18.12.—*They come.* John's disciples, already jealous of the Greater Teacher, are willing tools of the Pharisees.

19. *Sons of the bridechamber.* That is, companions of the bridegroom, RVm. They were the disciples.—*The bridegroom.* Their master, John the Baptist, had called Jesus this, Jn. 3.29. See Light from Oriental Life. Jesus' answer is that his disciples did not fast because they were joyous, in no mood for fasting.—*The days shall come.* The first prediction of his death: at the end of the road he was traversing in opposition to the Pharisees stood the cross.

21. *Taketh from it.* The new, undressed cloth may contract and cause the old cloth to give way, making a bigger rent. For explanation of this parable see page 134.

22. For explanation of this parable see page 134.—*Wine-skins.* That is, skins used as bottles. See page 130.—*The wine will burst the skins.* Through its fermentation and consequent expansion.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

14. *Follow me.* Come up higher, then, for there are nobler treasures than these to come, and a nobler king than Herod to render an account to. Thou hast been faithful over a few things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. *Ruskin.*

18. *John's disciples and the Pharisees.* The Pharisee with his externalism, and John the Baptist with his ascetic detachment from life, will give place to the Son of Man, who sanctified all human duties and relations by importing heavenly principles into them, and who in all things was about his Father's business. *Borden P. Bowne.*

22. *They put new wine into fresh wine-skins.* But the strongest and newest leather wineskin filled with fermenting must, would, if closely tied up, infallibly burst; on the other hand, if the neck were open, so that the gas could escape freely, an old skin need not split from that cause. A plausible explanation was suggested to me by a teetotal friend. The wine referred to must of course be unfermented grape juice, an old skin might contain germs which would set fermentation going, and so cause explosion of the tied-up vessel: a new one would be clear of such germs, and fermentation would be avoided, thus saving the skin. The point of the saying would then seem to be "Surtout pas trop de zèle!" But if this ingenious exegete had seen new water-skins in India (which, I suppose, must be much the same as wineskins in Palestine), he would hardly suspect them of freedom from germs. *H. U. Weitbrecht,* in *Expository Times.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

14. *The place of toll.* Levi was sitting on the elevated counter, or "bank," which constituted the central and essential part of the tax-office. The common shops and banks in the eastern bazaars are somewhat like box-beds, "in" and "on" which the shopman or banker sits cross-legged. *James Morison,* in *Practical Commentary.*

15. *Many publicans.* The right to collect taxes in each province was sold by the Roman government to a citizen or company of citizens at Rome, and the latter farmed out the collecting to other Roman citizens or to natives who cared more for the money than they did for public opinion. Such tax-collectors, or publicans as they were called, were hated and despised by the Jews, who classed

them with heathen and harlots, robbers and murderers, for not only were the publicans the agents and representatives of Rome, their foreign tyrant, but they were as a class dishonest and unscrupulous, extorting far more than the law required. "For a Jew to become a tax gatherer, to wear the Roman livery, to become the hireling of the Roman Government, was to commit the great apostasy; it was to sin against that glorious future foretold for the Jewish nation by seer and Psalmist; it was to become the tool of the oppressor." It must have been love of money that had made Matthew take up this despised calling.

"There was the poll-tax, and the land tax, which demanded a tenth of the corn and a fifth of the produce of vineyards and fruit-trees, and there were endless tolls on the most necessary wares, relentlessly exacted, at frontiers, at ferries, at bridges, in markets, and on roads, of which no small part went to the wealthy and greedy publican."

At present the Turkish government orders the tax-collectors in Palestine to collect a tenth, and permits them to demand a fifth. The farmer cannot hide what he would sell and thus avoid the tax, for his grain must be taken to the public threshing-floor to have a huge stamp affixed; he cannot take it away until the tax-collector is satisfied, and to satisfy him often requires an additional fifth for himself. According to Malcolm Maccoll, "the best living authority concerning the treatment of the Christians by the Turks," the Christians in Turkey have to pay sixty-seven per cent. of their produce in taxes.

16. *When they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans.* How great must have been the surprise of the Pharisees when Jesus chose a publican as a disciple, and how great must have been their indignation and contempt when they saw Jesus associating, even eating, with a number of publicans! For to sit at table and eat with this despised class was to incur the height of "uncleanness." While a Pharisee would ostentatiously step aside as if "to avoid breathing the air poisoned with the breath of the lost son of the House of Israel who had sold himself to a calling so infamous," yet he did not scruple to enter his house, seat himself on his matting, and freely engage in the conversation!

18. *John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting.* See page 213.

19. *Can the sons of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?* With singing and playing on instruments the friends of the bridegroom conducted the bride and her companions to the house of the bridegroom, where they remained for a week of feasting and mirth. The Talmud absolved them even from prayer and worship during these festivities.

22. *Old wineskins.* The wine-skins in which wine was "bottled," were made of the entire skin of a goat. The skin was drawn off whole, and after being tanned with oak-bark, was hung by a fire to dry and be thoroughly seasoned with smoke. The neck of the animal formed the neck of the "bottle."

Modern Oriental Water-skins.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As we have seen, the common people heard Jesus gladly, all men were seeking him, he could find no rest in desert places, and the sick beset his path wherever he went; but all the time the suspicious scribes and Pharisees were watching him and finding fault with him. In our last lesson we saw that the curing of the palsied man and the forgiving of his sins called down upon Jesus the Pharisees' charge that he was a blasphemer. To-day's lesson brings out two more charges, both of them of violations of established Rabbinical customs, the eating with publicans and sinners and the omission of fasting, for though the latter charge was made against the disciples it was aimed at their Master.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus went forth again by the sea-side. He had remained some time in Capernaum and he now began a second tour, directed doubtless southward

around the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was on the great highroad from Damascus, sometimes called the Way of the Sea and sometimes the Great West Road. Beyond Capernaum this highway divided, the one road going westward to the sea at Ptolemais, the other southward and then southwestward to the sea at Joppa and thence to Egypt. It was a paved Roman road on which toll was collected, and near Capernaum was a place of toll where Matthew was the collector. Assign paragraphs 50-52, 106 and 32-34, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Limit your lesson to verses 13-17. Review the call of the first four disciples. In talking about the call of Matthew show Tissot's picture No. 28, and explain the word publican and the Jewish hatred of publicans, Light from Oriental Life. Describe the scene at the feast in Matthew's house, showing Tissot's picture No. 29. Teach the first Topic, making good use of Christmas Evans' parable, page 132.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. During his earthly life the enemies of Jesus called him a "friend of sinners." They said this with much scorn, not knowing that they were saying a beautiful thing about him. Jesus had great compassion for sinners, he sat with them and talked with them that he might do them good. In the words of our Golden Text what does he say was his mission? The first recorded event that gave rise to this criticism followed after the call of one of his disciples. Which one? What was his business? What was a publican? Publicans and sinners are often classed together in the Gospels. Why were the publicans hated and scorned?

For Older Pupils. The Rev. Alexander Irvine came to our country as an Irish peasant lad, and in an interesting account which he entitles "From the Bottom Up," he describes his return to the old country on a visit to his father. "In 1901 I made the journey. I hadn't been in the old home long before the alley was filled with neighbors, curious to have a look at "ould James' son who was a clergyman." I went to the door and shook hands with everybody in the hope that they would go away and leave me with my own. But nobody moved. They stood and stared for several hours. I finally dismissed them with this phrase, as I drifted easily into the vernacular, "Shure we'd invite ye all to tay, but there's only three cups in the house." We shut and barred the door when the neighbors left, and many of the neighbors sat around the door outside to hear what they could."

The vivid picture that we thus get of life in certain parts of Ireland in 1901 bears some strong resemblances to life in Palestine in the first century. One of the chief oriental virtues is hospitality, and in obedience to its demands the oriental practically lives with open doors, that all may come in at pleasure. Thus it was that the Scribes and the Pharisees came to that feast in Matthew's house, of which they would have scorned to partake, but which they felt free to look upon and criticize.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Christ's Way with Failures

His Faith in Man. The Pharisees held that Jesus by eating with publicans and sinners had defiled himself. A jailer of our day has the true explanation of his attitude toward them. "Jesus must have been pure," he says, "because, being pure, he understood my kind of people. The only others who do *are* my kind of people."

Jesus Christ had faith in man, he understood the moral derelicts, he saw in them souls worth saving, to him they were children of the great family of God. Not only did he talk with them, but—the very climax of disregard of Pharisaic opinion—he sat at meat with them!

Dr. W. J. Dawson has a word here, in "The Divine Challenge." Jesus knew what was in man, and he knew that there was enough of good and of the desire of good even in the basest to encourage hopefulness. You will always find that those who have most faith in man are those who come into closest contact with man at his worst. I have never yet met a City Missionary or a Salvation Army Captain, or even a prison-visitor, whose eyes did not light up with faith in man, as he related some story of pity among the degraded, or kindness between the destitute. If you have lost faith in human nature, and want to recover it, the best suggestion that I can make is: Go down to some mission among the poor or the depraved, armed with kindness, and there amidst the dust and ashes of a half-ruined humanity, you will discover so much of goodness and greatness still left, that you will have no doubt about the inherent greatness of human nature. You know something of the outside of these men—their rags, their dirt, their physical debasement; learn to know what is in them, and you will find in the lowest, something to reverence and respect. And at least be sure of this; faith in God is quite impossible without faith in man.

Former and Present Methods with Educational and Spiritual Failures. What does the educational system of our country have to say about failures? Time was when they were simply overlooked in the educational scheme. The curriculum was planned for the brighter boys and girls, and those who failed to come up to the required standard were dropped back or dropped out, with as little compunction on the part of authorities as has the sorting machine which allows the little oranges that are failures in point of size to drop out of the race course while the successful larger ones roll on to the desired goal. Time now is when special attention is given to backward pupils, when every means possible is studied and used to develop them and make them successes in life.

Time was when the world gave scant heed to the needs of the wretched and degraded. Then came Jesus. And he never neglected the moral and spiritual failures. He never merely pitied them and passed them by. He was always seeking them out, and changing the base into the pure, the disreputable into the respectable. He had come for the express purpose of seeking and saving the lost. His mission was not to call the righteous, but sinners. Had he held himself disdainfully aloof from them, had he not at all times been most accessible to all of whatever sort or condition of life who needed him, his spirit would not be alive and active in the hearts of his followers to-day.

I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners. I will tell you what happened in a Welsh village, I need not say where. I was going through this village in early spring, and saw before me a beautiful house. As I came up a man stood knocking at the door. As I came near I saw that he stood as one who had knocked long; and as he knocked he listened. Said I: "The farmer is busy making up his books, or counting his money, or eating and drinking. Knock louder, sir, and he will hear you. But," said I, "you have great patience, sir, for you have been knocking a long time. If I were you I would leave him to-night, and come back to-morrow."

"He is in danger, and I must warn him," replied he; and knocked louder than ever.

Some time afterwards I went that way again, and there still stood the man, knocking, knocking, knocking. "Well, sir," said I, "your perseverance is the most remarkable I ever saw! How long do you mean to stop?"

"Till I can make him hear," was the answer; and he knocked again, and I went on my way, wondering at the goodness and patience of this man.

Again I was in those parts. It was very cold weather. There was an east wind blowing, and the sleety rain fell. As I came by the farmhouse there was still the man outside—knocking, knocking! And as I looked at him I saw that his hands and feet were bare and bleeding, and his visage as that of one marred with sorrow. My heart was very sad for him, and I said: "Sir, you would better not stand any longer at that hard man's door. Let me advise you to go over the way to the poor widow. She has many children, and she works for her daily bread; but she will make you welcome."

"I know her," he said. "I am with her continually; her door is ever open to me, for the Lord is the Husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. She is in bed with her little children."

"Then go," I replied, "to the blacksmith's yonder. I see the cheerful blaze of his smithy; he works early and late. His wife is a kind-hearted woman. They will treat you like a prince."

He answered solemnly, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

At that moment the door opened, and the farmer came out, cursing and swearing, with a cudgel in his hand, with which he smote the man, and then angrily shut the door in his face. "Sir," I exclaimed, "your patience and your long-suffering are wonderful; they are beyond my comprehension."

"The Lord is long-suffering, full of compassion, slow to anger, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And again he knocked, as he answered me.

"Smite him, Lord!" I cried in my indignation; "then perhaps he will hear thee!"

"Of a truth he shall hear me. In the day of judgment he shall hear me when I say, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity, into everlasting darkness, prepared for the devil and his angels." After these words I saw him no more. The wind blew, and the sleety rain fell, and I went back to the Inn. Condensed from a Sermon by Christmas Evans, in *The Record of Christian Work.*

II Christians and the Non-Respectable

A Confession. Now I see, as I look back, that I was not a lover of my kind. I did not love men as men, humanity as humanity, as Jesus did. Of course I loved individuals, and even groups of men and classes of men, who could understand my thoughts, recognize my qualities, and repay my affection with affection. But to feel love for men as men, for those whose vulgarity distressed me, whose ignorance offended me, whose method of life repelled me, love for the drudge, the helot, the social pariah, love for people who had no beauty that men should desire them, nor any grace of mind or person, nor any quality that kindled interest; love for the dull average with their painful limitations of mind and ideal, the gray armies of featureless grief, whose very sorrows had nothing picturesque in them and no tragic fascination—no, for these I had no real love. I had a deep commiseration, but it was that kind of romantic or aesthetic pity which begins and ends in its own expression. I did not know them by actual contact, I could not honestly say that I wished to know them. And then the thought came to me, and grew in me, that Jesus did love these people with an unconquerable passion. The multitudes to whom he preached were composed, as all multitudes are, of quite ordinary, immemorable people. He also, to the eyes of those who saw him in the peasant garb of Galilee, and judged only by outward appearance, was a common man. And so it would appear that if I did not love men after the fashion in which Jesus loved them, it was very unlikely that I should love Jesus Christ himself if he once more appeared in the habit in which men saw him long ago in Galilee. A Jesus, footsore, weary, travel-stained, wearing the raiment of a village carpenter, speaking with the accent of an unconsidered province, surrounded by a rabble of rude fishermen, among whom mingled many persons of doubtful character—how should I regard him? Should I discern the Light and Life of men beneath his gray disguise of circumstance? Should I have left my books, my studious calm, my pleasant and sufficing tasks, to listen to One who seemed so little likely to instruct me? Would not the same spirit of disdain which made me think lightly and even scornfully of persons whose lives had no resemblance to my own, have made me disdainful of the Man of Nazareth? I knew the answer and I quailed before it. I saw that the temper of my mind was the temper of the Pharisee and had I lived two thousand years ago in Jerusalem or Galilee, I should have rejected Jesus even as the scribes and Pharisees rejected him. And I should have rejected him for the same reason, because I had no truly generous love of man as man. *W. J. Dawson,* in *The Empire of Love.*

Our Human Rubbish Heap. The publication of General Booth's "Through Darkest England," several years ago, gave currency to the striking phrase, "the submerged tenth." It will not do to construe the phrase too strictly, but certainly it expresses a gruesome and ominous fact.

At the bottom of our social structure there is a stratum of "the bad." This term is used here not in the sense of moral reprobation, but in the sense in which it is used, for example, of castings that come from the molds defective. In this sense no one will question the statement that a certain stratum of humanity is bad. It is composed of the imbecile, the incompetent, the vicious and the criminal. It is found in all our great cities, but it is found also in the smaller towns, and even in the country. It is a sort of human rubbish-heap, and is the perpetual accompaniment and foil of our fair civilization. Perhaps we ought to say that it is a constant feature or element of our civilization. Every community has its "rubbish-heap," large or small.

But the phrase, "the submerged tenth," covers a larger fact than is indicated above. For despite all the efforts of society to reduce it, through the work of churches, Sunday-school missions, reform organizations, and the multitude of other agencies, the stratum of human waste is only slightly diminished. There is a constant production of "the bad." They are recruited from the cradle. Besides, they are scarcely more than touched by most of the reformative and moralizing enterprizes that have been mentioned.

This is the great sociological problem that confronts us: How shall we effectively deal yith "the submerged tenth"? How shall we reduce the "human rubbish-heap"? How shall we check the production of "the bad"? These are questions to make boys and girls and men and women—think. *Youth's Companion.*

The Only Religion for the Non-Respectable. Christianity is a Faith which seeks disciples, a missionary and converting Faith, a Faith which despairs of no man, and is able to save the most abandoned and wretched victims of sin. The attitude of Christianity to the sinner is that of the incomparable fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. And the conclusion of the whole matter is in the words: "It is meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." Such a spirit exists in no religion conceived in the brain of man. Only in Christianity does the love of God beat down upon the sinful: only in Christianity does a Saviour stand at the door of the hardening heart; only in Christianity is it written, The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. *Harold Begbie,* in *Souls in Action.*

III New Wine and Old Bottles

The Meaning of the Parables of the New Cloth and Old Garment, and of the New Wine and Old Bottles. In these parables Jesus defended the practice of both John the Baptist and himself against the attacks of the Pharisees. The parable of the new cloth and old garment shows that John the Baptist was right in having his disciples keep the old fasts: John belonged to Judaism, his teaching was the old piece of cloth added to the old garment. But what was needed was not an improved old garment but a new one, a new life. Jesus' teaching was the new cloth which would not be patched on to the old garment. Just as the new, undressed cloth would shrink when wet and being stronger than the old would draw away from it and make a bigger rent, so the new truth patched on to the old would later make a greater gap. Fasting befitted John's teaching: it was incongruous with Jesus' teaching.

In the parable of the new wine and old bottles Jesus shows that not only will the old be harmed but the new will be lost. Fermenting wine in a stiff, unyielding old wine-skin will burst the skin and will itself be spilled and lost. This parable teaches that Jesus is right in not having his disciples observe the old fast days. His teaching is the new wine, and the old Judaism was unable to hold the new truths.

The True Attitude toward New Religious Thought. The true attitude is that of men of open mind, eager to learn, responsive to every whisper of truth, from whatever source it comes. Largely the business of life is to learn. God has not given us a finished universe whose mission and method are at once clear, but a world in the making, a great kingdom of truth and love in the germ, in which men groping and growing, stumbling and rising again, in that very process are to find themselves and to find their God. Conviction which closes the mind to new light is prejudice, and prejudice is the most fatal form of ignorance.

But, eager to learn, we must be cautious to conclude that the thing that is new is necessarily the thing that is true. In this the leaders of modern science set a good example. The wisest of them still speak of the great principle of growth which has revolutionized the thought of men in the last fifty years as "the evolutionary hypothesis." While there is one missing link the chain is not complete. Again and again the confident conclusion of to-day has been the exploded fallacy of to-morrow. "That is possible," Louis Pasteur used to say, "but we must look more deeply into the subject." The thoughts of men frequently swing from one extreme to another ere they light upon the central pole of truth.

Most of all, the truly religious attitude toward the newest thought of our time is that of men who have the courage and expectation and broadening vision of a rugged and fearless faith.

Long ago, one of humble, self-less spirit, whose earthly life was to human eyes a tragic failure, forsaken by his few friends, crucified upon a tree, dared to say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Is not the past a glorious prophecy of the future? Is it not reasonable to be sure that "the best is yet to be"? Out of his Holy Word, out of the exhaustless storehouses of the natural world, out of the hearts of men growing up into his image, God has yet more light to break forth, more love to radiate, larger life here and hereafter to reveal. Condensed from *A Working Theology* by *Dr. Alexander MacColl.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

'Tis impious in a good man to be sad. *Edward Young.*

We pray God to forgive us our sins: we ought to pray to be forgiven our sadness. *Dr. Charles F. Aked.*

Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness... to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are east out to thy house. Isa. 58.7.

You may go to meetings and discuss the question, "How to reach the masses," but when you have done with discussion you have to go back to personal effort. *D. L. Moody.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Matthew might have been so engrossed in counting his money as to pay no heed to the call of Jesus: we may sometime miss the call because so absorbed in other things.

The Pharisees went to Jesus' disciples and criticised Jesus, and to Jesus and criticised his disciples. Are we ever guilty of similar cowardly criticisms?

Jesus' mission was to call sinners. We are not gross sinners, but the call is to us, for as Paul says, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

It was the sinners, not the righteous, who needed Jesus most, and he always responded to the need. Do you think about this question of need, of what you can do for others, when you choose your companions?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. A protest against social ostracism. Expect a publican to be a thief and he will be; treat him with respect and he will become worthy of respect.
2. The mission of the church to moral derelicts.
3. "Slumming." See "Lift Men from the Gutter, or, Remove the Gutter, Which?" by Ray Stannard Baker in *American Magazine,* July 1909: article by Henry Oyen in *World's Work,* May, 1911.
4. The problem in religion to-day: how to adjust the old to the new.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Give your pupils the subjects for the written work which you wish to have them write during the week and bring to you next Sunday. See page 143.

Have them record this lesson in their Note Books, as they have been doing from week to week.

LESSON XIII—MARCH 31

REVIEW

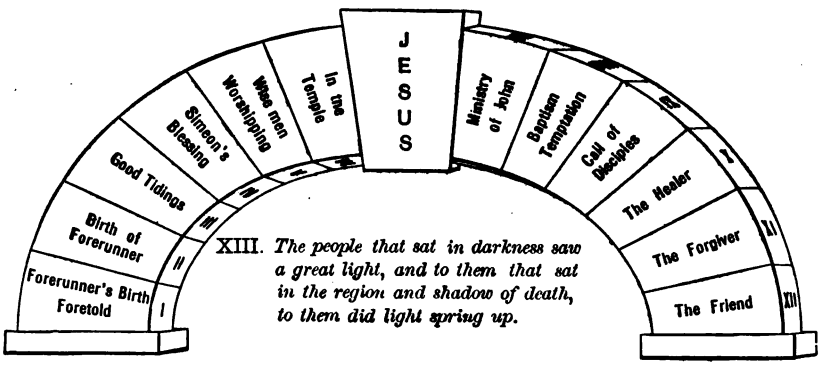
Golden Text

The people that sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up. Mt. 4.16

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 1.5-23. The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold. Luke 1.57-80. The Birth of John the Baptist. **T.** Luke 2.1-20. The Birth of Jesus. Luke 2.22-39. The Presentation in the Temple. **W.** Matt. 2.1-23. The Wise Men Led by the Star. Luke 2.40-52. The Boy Jesus in the Temple. **T.** Mark 1.1-8; Luke 3.1-20. The Ministry of John the Baptist. Mark 1.9-13; Matt. 4.1-11. The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus. **F.** Mark 1.14-28; Luke 5.1-11. The Call of the First Disciples. Mark 1.29-45; Matt. 4.23-25. Jesus the Healer. **S.** Mark 2.1-12. The Paralytic Forgiven and Healed. **S.** Mark 2.13-22. Feasting and Fasting. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

A REVIEW FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

This review may be conducted by twelve persons besides the leader. Have the arch drawn upon the blackboard beforehand. Let the leader call for the subject and Golden Text of the first lesson and then write "Forerunner's Birth Foretold" in the first block, and on another part of the board the Outline given below. Then let the one appointed for the first lesson give a three-minute talk. Great variety in the twelve lesson "talks" can be obtained, for one may give a



telling illustration, another may draw out the story by apt questions, a third may recite a poem that enforces the lesson thought, a fourth may give a graphic word picture, a fifth may sing a song whose words apply to the lesson, etc. A bell tap should stop each speaker when his time has been consumed, or the review may become too long.

I. To the Childless Priest a Promise is made, 5-17.
Punishment is given, 18-23.

II. The Forerunner's name, 57-66.
Father's prophecy, 67-75.

III. Good Tidings of Great Joy to All People, 8-14.

Shepherds Seek the Saviour and Glorify God, 15-20.

IV. Presentation, Prophecy and Praise, 25-38.

V. The King sought by Wisemen, 1-8.
found and Worshipped, 9-12.

VI. The Development, 40-32.
Devotion, 41-50.
Duty, 51.
of the Boy Jesus.

VII. The Forerunner's Message Be baptized, 1-6.
Be penitent, 7-9.
Bear fruit, 8-14.
Behold the Christ, 15-17.

VIII. Jesus Baptized, 9-10. Tempted, 1-10.
Blessed, 11. Triumphant, 11.

IX. Four Disciples Called, 14-20.
The Demoniac Cured, 21-28.

X. Fever Cured, 29-31.
Demons Cast out, 32-39.
Leprosy Cleansed, 40-45.

XI. Jesus Can Cure Sickness, 1-12.
Sin, 1-12.

XII. Jesus Calls Matthew to Follow, 13-14.
Criticised for attending a Feast, 15-17.
Criticised for not Fasting, 18-22.

A REVIEW FOR LITTLE FOLKS

Have the pictures on the next page copied upon blackboard or cardboard, large enough to be easily seen by all in your class. Each square should be covered with its own square of paper fastened on by pin or thumb tack. Remove one paper at a time and question your pupils about the lesson which the picture recalls.

A REVIEW FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

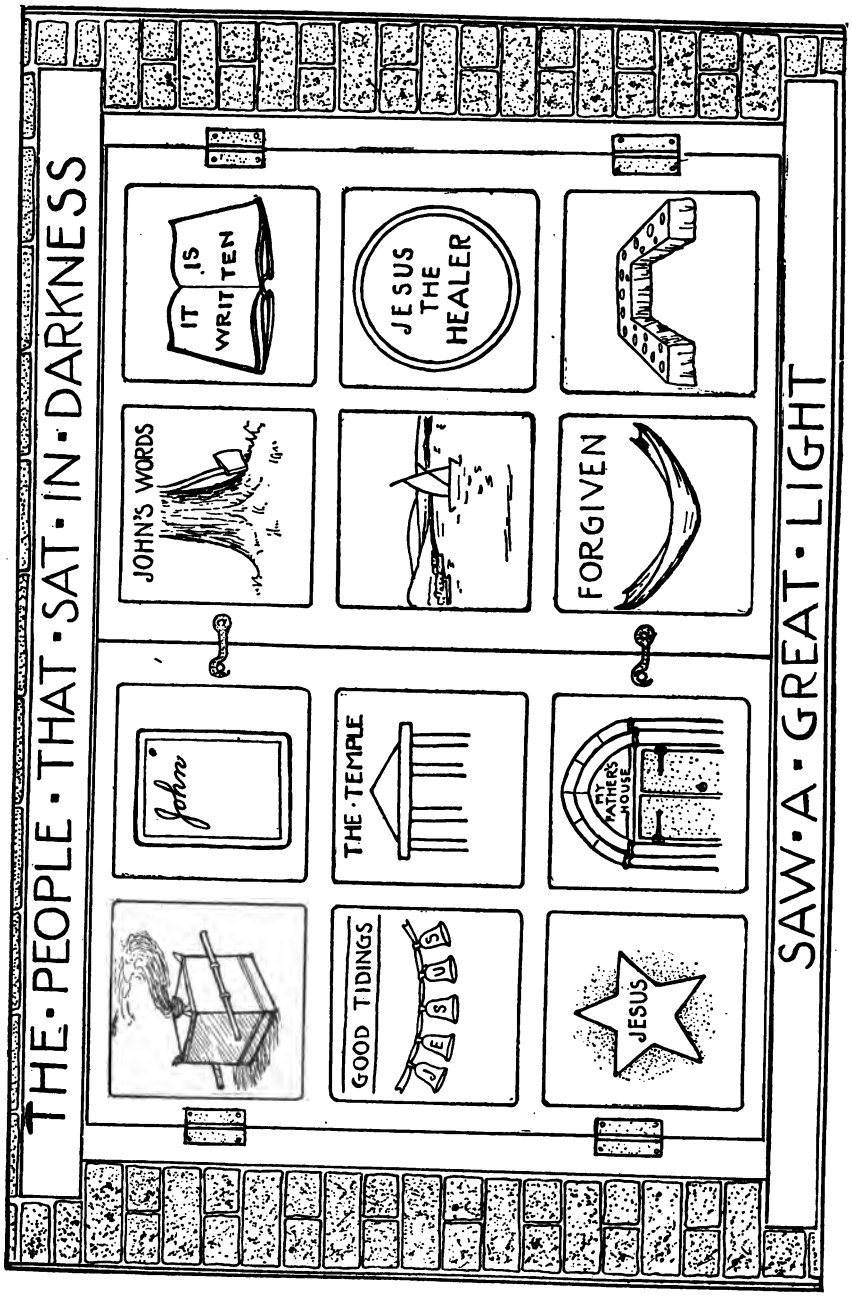
This review may be written on a typewriter and enough carbon copies made to supply every pupil. Let the blanks be long enough for the omitted words. Well-sharpened pencils should be brought for pupils' use.

Instead of having the omitted words written they may be given orally, the teacher reading and pausing at the omissions for replies.

I. In the home of ... and ... there was no little ... One day when ... was in the ... burning ... on the altar, an ... stood by him and said that he should have a ... and his name should be ... Because ... doubted, the angel said that he should not be able to ... until the promise came true.

II. When the little ... who came to Elisabeth, was ... days old, he received his ... The friends thought he would be called ... for his father, but the mother said, Not so, he shall be called ... Then they asked the father what his name should be and he ... on a tablet, His ... is ... Then the father was able to ... once more and he blessed God. The people wondered, and said, What shall this ... be? for they saw that God was with him.

III. There were ... in the field keeping watch over their ... to whom an ... of the Lord came and said: ... not, for I bring you good ... which shall be to all the ....: for there is ... to you this day in the city of David a ..., who is ... the Lord. And then the angel told them that they should find the .... lying in a ... And then the shepherds heard these words: Glory to ...


THE · PEOPLE · THAT · SAT · IN · DARKNESS
SAW · A · GREAT · LIGHT
IT IS WRITTEN
JOHN'S WORDS
John
JESUS THE HEALER
THE · TEMPLE
GOOD TIDINGS
JESUS
MY FATHERS HOUSE
FORGIVEN

in the highest, and on ... peace among ... in whom he is well ... The shepherds went to ... and found the ... in the ... and when they returned they ... God for all the things they had heard and seen.

IV. God had told an old man in Jerusalem named ... that he should not ... before he had seen the Lord's ... One day the parents of Jesus brought him to the ... to present him to ..., and ... knew it was ... Taking the Babe in his ... he blessed God for, he said, mine eyes have seen thy ..., which thou hast prepared before the face of all ... a ... for revelation to the Gentiles, and the ... of thy people Israel. And a widow named ... came up at this time, and gave ... unto God for she, too, knew Jesus.

V. Now there came ... to ... saying, Where is he that is born ... of the ..., for we saw his ... in the east and are come to ... him. And when ... heard this he was troubled. He called together the chief ... and ... and asked them where the Christ should be born. In ... of ..., they answered. Then ... sent the ... to ... and bade them come back and tell him where they had found the child, for he wished also to ... him. The ... went before the ..., and stood over the place where the young ... was. They came into the house and saw the ... with ... his mother, and worshipped him, offering their gifts of ... and ... and ... Being warned in a ... that they should not return to ..., they went home another way.

VI. And the ... grew, and waxed, ..., filled with ... and the ... of God was upon him. When he was ... years old he went with his ... to ... to attend the feast of the ... When his parents started for home they ... Jesus and went again to ... to search for him. They ... him in the ... sitting with the ..., hearing them and ... them ... "Son, Why hast thou thus ... with us?" his mother said and he answered, "How is it that ye ... me? knew ye not that I ... be in my ... house?" Then Jesus went home with them to ... and was ... unto them. And he advanced in ... and ..., and in ... with ... and ...

VII. John the ... came to the ... and began preaching and ... as it was written by Isaiah the prophet: the ... of one crying in the ..., make ye ... the ... of the Lord, make his ... straight. Who ... you to flee from the ... to come? he said to the multitude. Bring forth therefore ... worthy of ... When he was asked whether he were ... he answered: I indeed ... you with ...; but there cometh One that is ... than I, the latchet of whose ... I am not ... to unloose; he shall ... you in the Holy ... and in ...

VIII. And when Jesus came from ... of ... to the ... and was baptized by ... he saw the ... rent asunder and ... as a ... descending upon him, and he heard a voice saying, Thou art my ... son, in thee I am well pleased.

Then Jesus was led into the ... to be ... of the devil. After he had fasted ... days he was ... And the ... came and bade him turn ... into ... It is written, said Jesus, Man shall not live by ... alone, but by every ... that proceedeth out of the mouth of ... Then the devil bade him cast himself down from the ... of the ..., for it is written, he said, he shall give his ... charge concerning thee; in their ... they shall ... thee up, lest haply thou ... thy ... against a stone. But Jesus answered, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make ... of the Lord thy God. Then from a very high ... the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the ... and promised him all if he would ... down and ... him. Get thee hence ..., said Jesus, for it is ..., Thou shalt ... the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou ... Then the devil left him, and ... came and ministered unto him.

IX. Walking by the Sea of ... Jesus saw two brothers, ... and ... and said to them, Come ye after me, and I will make you ... of ... They left their ... and ... him. Two other brothers ... and ... left their ... in the ... and ... with him. They all went to ... and on the ... day Jesus taught in the ... All were ... at his teaching, for he taught as having ... and not as the ... When Jesus drove out a ... from a man, all were amazed; saying, What is this? a new teaching? with ... he commandeth even the unclean ..., and they obey him.

X. From the synagogue Jesus went to the house of ... where he found ... wife's ... sick of a ... Jesus took her by the ..., and the ... left her. At evening they brought to him ... that were sick and possessed with ... and he ... them. In the morning he went into a lonely place and while ... there the

disciples came to tell him that all men were ... him. Let us go to the next towns that I may ... them also, said Jesus, for to this end came I forth. "If thou ..., thou canst make me ...," a leper said to Jesus, and Jesus was moved with ... and cured him.

XI. One day when Jesus was in Capernaum there was so great a ... gathered to hear him that there was no room even about the ... When ... men came bringing to Jesus a man sick of the ... they could not enter. Going to the ... they uncovered it, and let down the ... on which lay the ... man. Jesus seeing their ... said to the man, Son, thy ... are ... Who can ... sins but God, questioned the scribes in their hearts. Jesus knew their ... and said to them, "Which is ... to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy ... are ... or to say ... and take up thy ... and ...? That they might know that the Son of man has ... to forgive sins, Jesus turned to the sick man and bade him ... and go to his ... The man ... and all were ...

XII. As Jesus was passing by he saw ... sitting at the place of ... and said, ... me. And he arose and ... . gave a feast for Jesus. The ... asked the disciples, How is it that he eateth with ... and ...? When Jesus heard of it he said, They that are ... have no need of a ..., but they that are ... I came not to call the ... but sinners. John's disciples came and asked Jesus why his ... did not ... The friends of the bridegroom do not ... while he is with them, but they will ... when he is taken from them, answered Jesus.

A REVIEW BY MEANS OF ALLUSIONS

Write several copies of each quotation below on separate slips of paper, and let each pupil draw one and then write briefly the account to which allusion is made. When he has finished, let him have another quotation. Announce next Sunday the one who did the best.

For an oral review each quotation may be read aloud to the class, letting all pupils who recognize the allusion signify this, and then the lesson to which it refers may be quickly recalled by a few questions.

"He touched the leper tenderly,
So in his hands there came to be
Wide wounds that were not wrought with nails.
Alas, my hands are smooth and fair,
No wound is on them anywhere,
Now any scarlet scar of nails."

The friend of God will yearn after lonely men everywhere; he will be the friend of publicans and sinners. *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

We who look for Jesus ought to be joyful; it is no credit to our Lord when we look as though we were seeking his grave. Let us smile as we go, for we have the star if we will but look up and put ourselves in the right path. *Thomas Champness.*

The presence of a pure character rebukes unrighteousness and summons sinners to repentance as really, if not as distinctly, as John the Baptist's "Repent ye." *William V. Kelly.*

Many have grasped the golden prize and won the victor's wreath because loving and heroic helpers pushed a way for them through the crowd, broke up the roof, and let them down into the presence of fortune and glory. *W. L. Watkinson.*

Certain it is that no man ever made the way of the Lord straight and waited in vain for the Lord's coming. *George Hodges.*

When blow after blow falls suddenly in a dozen directions, and the life that seemed joyous and confident is rent with anguish or blighted with defeat, we may say, This is God's hand, driving us into the wilderness, this is his voice saying, "Quit you like men, be strong." *Alexander MacColl.*

"This is he whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord;
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word."

"Calm on the listening ear of night
Come heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches forth
Her silver-mantled plains;
Celestial choirs from courts above
Shed sacred glories there;
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,
Make music on the air."

We may go in peace, if our eyes have seen him who satisfies our vision, whose bright presence will go with us into the darkness, and whom we shall see more perfectly when we have passed to the home above. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

It is not a sign of being in the grace of God when one is out of favor with men. *Dr. G. C. Morgan.*

I would lay upon all our hearts the plain, practical lesson that, if we keep in that tepid region of lukewarmness, which is the utmost approach to tropical heat that moral and religious questions are capable of raising in many of us, good-bye to all chance of being "great in the sight of the Lord." *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian Sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow thee. *Whittier.*

QUESTIONS FOR LITTLE FOLKS

1. Who was Zacharias? What promise was made to him in the temple? What happened to him because he did not at once believe the message? When was he able to speak again?
2. What was the name of his son? Why were the people surprised at this name?
3. Where was Jesus born? How did the shepherds hear about his birth? What did the angel say? What did the heavenly host sing? What was the cradle of the Christ-child?
4. Where was Jesus taken when he was eight days old? What was the name of the man who was so glad to see him, the Lord's Christ, before he died? What did the man do?
5. What men made a long journey to see the Christ-child, and what gifts did they bring him?
6. How did Jesus grow in boyhood? When he was twelve years old where did he go with his parents? How was he lost and found? What did he tell Mary, his mother?
7. What did John the Baptist do at the Jordan? What did he tell the people to do? Who did he say was far greater than he?
8. When Jesus was baptized what words did he hear? What happened to him in the wilderness? How did he gain the victory?
9. What were the names of the four men whom Jesus called to be his disciples? What were they doing when Jesus told them to follow him?
10. Whom did Jesus cure who was sick with a fever? What did a leper ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus answer?
11. How was a man who could not walk brought to Jesus? How did his friends get him near Jesus? What did Jesus do for him?
12. What is the name of the disciple who made a feast for Jesus? Who found fault with Jesus for eating with sinners? What did Jesus answer?
13. Name the four Gospels. What are the Gospels about?

QUESTIONS FOR AN ORAL OR A WRITTEN REVIEW

For Younger Pupils.

1. How many books are there in the New Testament?
2. Name the Books of the New Testament.
3. Name the four Gospels.

4. Which Gospel tells us most about the infancy and boyhood of Jesus?
5. Where was Jesus born?
6. What two groups of men went to see the Infant Jesus?
7. What two mistakes did Eugene Field make in this stanza?

Once a lovely shining star,
Seen by shepherds from afar,
Gently moved until its light
Made a manger's cradle bright.

(It was the Wise-men, not the shepherds, who saw the star, and it was over a house, not a manger, that the star stood.)

8. How old was Jesus when he was first taken to the temple?
9. How old was he when he went to the passover for the first time?
10. What verse tells all that we know about Jesus after he was twelve years old until he was about thirty years old?
11. How was John the Baptist different from other men?
12. What was his message?
13. Where did Jesus go after his baptism?
14. What were his three temptations?
15. How old was Jesus when he began his public ministry?
16. What city did Jesus make his headquarters when he began his ministry in Galilee?
17. Name five men whom Jesus called to be his disciples.
18. What was Matthew's business before he became a disciple?
19. Which of the disciples were fishermen?
20. Whom did Jesus cure in Peter's house, what was her trouble, and what did she do after the cure?
21. What did a leper say to Jesus, what did Jesus answer, and what then happened?
22. How did the friends of the palsied man get him to Jesus and what did Jesus do for him?
23. Who found fault with Jesus, for what reason, and what answer did Jesus give? 24. Locate all the cities mentioned in this Quarter.

Questions for Older Pupils.

I Questions upon the history between Malachi and Matthew

1. How many centuries between the Old Testament and the New?
2. What was the political situation at the birth of Christ?
3. How did the Persian Kingdom come to an end?
4. What did Alexander the Great accomplish?
5. What was the effect of his conquest upon the Jews?
6. What city did he found in Egypt, and what translation of the Bible was afterwards made for the Jews living there?
7. What became of his kingdom upon his death?
8. What nations strove to gain possession of Palestine, and under whose rule were the Jews until 200 B. C.?
9. When and under whom did Palestine become a part of Syria?
10. How did the Jews regard Antiochus the Great?
11. What was the effect of the Greek influence upon Palestine?
12. What was the origin of the parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees?
13. What did the Jews endure under Antiochus Epiphanes?
14. What led to the Maccabæan revolt?
15. Who was the head of the Maccabæan family?
16. What happened under Judas Maccabæus?
17. What happened under Jonathan Maccabæus?
18. What happened under Simon Maccabæus?
19. What happened under John Hyrcanus?
20. What happened between the time of John Hyrcanus and the coming of the Romans?
21. How did Palestine become a part of Rome?
22. When did Herod the Great become ruler?
23. What can you tell about this Herod?
24. How was Herod's Kingdom divided upon his death?

25. Who was Herod Antipas, and what is told about him in the Gospels?
26. What are the Apocryphal Books?
27. Which of the Apocryphal Books give the history of the times between the two Testaments?

II Questions upon the Quarter's Lessons

1. What persons were waiting for the advent of the Messiah, and what were their expectations in regard to him?
2. In which Gospel is the story of the visit of the Wise-men found?
3. The announcement to the shepherds?
4. The visit of the Boy Jesus to the temple?
5. How did John the Baptist prepare the way for the coming of Jesus?
6. What was the difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism?
7. Why was Jesus baptized?
8. What were the three temptations of Jesus and how did he meet them?
9. In what respects are the temptations in the Wilderness and in Gethsemane alike?
10. How old was Jesus when he began to preach?
11. What city of Galilee did Jesus make his headquarters and why was this a wise choice?
12. Name three miracles which show the power of Jesus over disease.
13. What was the first recorded time that Jesus had to defend an action because it was not understood?
14. What complaint did the Pharisees make to Jesus and how did he answer them?

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN WORK TO BE BROUGHT TO CLASS

For Younger Pupils.

1. Tell the story which this picture recalls. (Penny pictures, named with each lesson under "Suggestions to Teachers of Little Folks.")
2. Jesus as a Baby.
3. Jesus as a Boy.
4. How Jesus went about doing good.
5. The story of a broken roof, why it was broken and what happened afterwards.

For Older Pupils.

1. The story of the birth of Jesus, first from the standpoint of Zacharias, second from that of the shepherds, third from that of the Wise-men.
2. The effect that the search of the Wise-men had upon themselves, Herod, the people of Jerusalem, the chief priests and scribes, the parents of Jesus, the people of Bethlehem.
3. John the Baptist, his character and mission.
4. The life of Jesus before his public ministry.
5. An account of a busy day in Jesus' life.
6. The history of the centuries between the two Testaments.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Read the accounts of the appearances of the Risen Lord given in the Gospels. (Mt. 28.1-20; Mk. 16.1-20; Lk. 23.56-24.53; Jn. 20.1-21, 25.) 2. Who wrote the Epistles to the Corinthians? 3. Why? 4. Which are the two best chapters in the first letter? (For last three questions clipping, p. 145.) 5. What appearances of the Risen Lord are omitted from the list in First Cor.? (To the women, to the unknown disciples on the road to Emmaus.) 6. Were the twelve disciples all present at the appearance mentioned in v. 5? 7. What is said in Acts 8.3 about Paul's persecution of the church? 8. When did Jesus appear to Paul? (Acts 9.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why do we call this Easter Day? 2. Write the first three verses in your own words. 3. Are the words of Paul in v. 10 full of pride? Why does he write this to the Corinthians? (Clipping, p. 145.) 4. What is the meaning of v. 11?

SECOND QUARTER

LESSON I—APRIL 7

THE APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN LORD (Easter Lesson).

Golden Text

This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Acts 2.32

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** 1 Cor. 15.1-11. The Appearances of the Risen Lord. **T.** Matt. 28.1-10. Angel's Message. **W.** Mark 16.1-8. Witness of the Women. **T.** Luke 24.13-27. Journey to Emmaus. **F.** John 20.1-12. Jesus and Mary. **S.** Acts 1.1-11. The Lord's Ascension. **S.** 1 Thess. 4.13-18. Resurrection of the Saints. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON 1 Cor. 15.1-11 COMMIT vv 10, 11

1 Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto
you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, 2 by which also ye are
saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed
in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that
Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 and that he was buried;
and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; 5
and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; 6 then he appeared to
above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until
now, but some are fallen asleep; 7 then he appeared to James; then to all
the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to the *child* untimely born, he appeared to me
also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an
apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God
I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found
vain: but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of
God which was with me. 11 Whether then *it be* I or they, so we preach, and
so ye believed.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-3. *The gospel.* Or, *good tidings,* RVm.—*Which I preached unto you.* While at Corinth with them.—*Saved.* "That is, are in the way of salvation, by faith in the crucified and risen Saviour" (*Dummelow*).—*If ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you.* The Corinthians were not in danger of denying Christianity, but of not accepting its true teachings as Paul had declared it unto them.—*In vain.* Or, *without cause,* RVm.—*I delivered unto you.* I told you.—*First of all.* It was the most important of all the good tidings which he declared to them.—*I received.* Probably from Peter and James on his visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 9.27, 28.—*For our sins.* To atone for our sins.—*According to the scriptures.* In fulfillment of the scriptures.

5-7. *Cephas.* Simon Peter, Lk. 24.34. Paul omits the appearances to Mary Magdalene and to the two on the way to Emmaus.—*To the twelve.* Paul keeps the symbolical number, even though Judas was dead and Thomas was not present.—*To five hundred brethren.* Probably on the mount in Galilee, Mt. 28. 16, 17.—*Remain until now.* You can have their direct testimony, if you wish, Paul means. At least twenty-five years have passed since the resurrection.—*Are fallen asleep.* Are dead.—*James.* The brother of Jesus, Acts 15.13; Gal. 1.19.—*To all the apostles.* Just before the ascension, Acts 1.4.—*To me also.* To Paul, the writer of this letter, when on his way to Damascus, Acts 9.

9-11. *The least of the apostles.* Compare 1 Tim. 1.12-16.—*I persecuted the church of God.* As recorded in Acts 8.3.—*The grace of God.* "Grace is the love of God seen in its contact with human sin and need" (*Holden*).—*What I am.* The apostle to the Gentiles.—*Vain.* Or, *void,* RVm.—*I labored more abundantly than they all.* Paul adds this because the Corinthians had heard his apostleship denied, 1 Cor. 1.12; 2 Cor. 11.5; 12.11.—*Or they.* Or the other apostles.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *Except ye believed in vain.* If I believed in immortality as you believe in it, as you profess to do, I should live a far better life than you appear to live. I should strive more earnestly and bear more patiently. I do not think I should ever be troubled with a fear, or worried with an earthly burden. I think it would be all sunlight and joy if I believed as you do in eternal things—in resurrection and a life beyond in which all things will be made right. *Harriet Martineau.*

4. *That he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day.*

Oh, vanquished grave of Jesus whose chill could work no change upon his heart!
Oh, deep, deep grave of Jesus whose depths can hide a whole world's sin!
Oh, glorious grave of Jesus through whose gloom lies the pathway to Immortal Life! *Ralph Connor,* in *The Recall of Love.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

4. *That he hath been raised.* At this time there were four conceptions of the future: first, absorption into God; second, transmigration of souls, or living in another body; third, living in one's own body, embalmed for the purpose, or gathered from the four winds of heaven by a miracle at the resurrection at the last day; and fourth, life in a disembodied state in a shadowy underworld. Out of the resurrection of Christ there grew a fifth conception respecting the future life: a strong, firm belief in the personal resurrection and the personal immortal life of the dead, based upon and inspired by faith in the fact that Jesus Christ had died and had risen again from the dead. *Dr. Lyman Abbott,* in *The Life and Letters of Paul.*

4. *On the third day.* The Jews counted a part of a day as an entire day. Christ was crucified on the afternoon of Friday, and arose on the morning of Sunday, thus lying in the tomb three days according to their way of reckoning time.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The rulers of the Jews had expected that the crucifixion of Jesus would put an end to his sway over the hearts of men, but they counted not on the power of his resurrection. Consternation and despair had fallen on the little group of followers when their Master was laid in the tomb, but courage and confidence were quickly restored when he arose from the dead and appeared to them at intervals during forty days. Jesus was exalted to "the right hand of God, and became head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1.20-23).

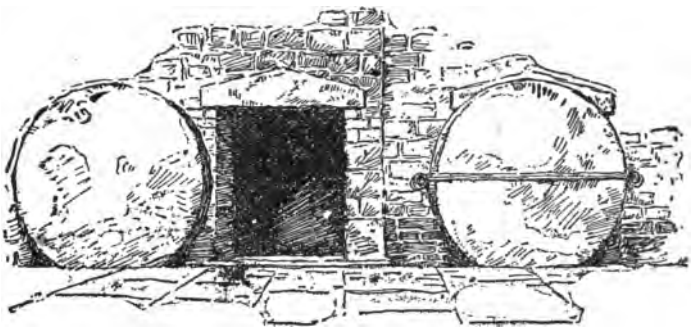
The passage chosen for our Easter lesson is from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, one of the two great chapters of that letter, the other being the 13th, the pæan of love. This chapter on the resurrection contains the earliest written historical proof of our Lord's resurrection. It was written before the writing of our Gospels, probably in A. D. 54 or 55, only about twenty-five years after the resurrection itself, when many of the witnesses were still living, and is therefore the most valued of all the historical evidences of the resurrection. The words repeat what Paul had told the Corinthians when four years earlier, during his second missionary journey, he had spent eighteen months in Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia (Greece). Because in the interval his own authority had been called in question, he added the words about himself in the latter part of our lesson.

The appearances of the Risen Lord are given in chronological order, but those to the women and to the two unknown disciples on their way to Emmaus

are omitted. The date of the forty days during which he appeared was from April 9 to May 18, A. D. 30.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Early on Sunday morning the women visited the tomb of Jesus and found the stone rolled away; Peter and John visited the tomb and found the folded garments; Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and then to the other woman. In



A Tomb Opened and Another Closed by a Stone

the afternoon Jesus appeared to Peter, and to two disciples on their way to Emmaus. In the evening he appeared to the disciples in the upper room while Thomas was absent, and a week later again, in the presence of Thomas. The disciples departed to Galilee and there Jesus appeared to seven of them by the Sea of Galilee. On a mountain in Galilee he appeared to many disciples. The Ascension was from the Mount of Olives. The appearance to Paul was when he was on his way to Damascus. Assign paragraph 33 of the "Life," and paragraphs 119, 126 with a review of 14-16, 32-34 of the geography, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

We have been talking about the work that Jesus did when he was living here, but to-day we are going to skip to the end of our story and see what happened after he had finished his work that his Father gave him to do. Wonderful things happened, for though Jesus died and was buried, he arose from the dead and was afterwards seen by many persons, with whom he talked and whom he cheered and comforted.

After an introduction along this line, tell about the appearances of the Risen Lord so that they will be very real to your pupils. Omit all mention of Paul, of the Corinthians, the first three and the last four verses of the lesson, limiting your talk to the thought of verses 4-7. Impress the truth that Jesus lived after he died, and that he is still living, though we can no longer see him, and that this is for us a joyous truth, one that makes us especially happy on this Easter Day, which celebrates his rising from the dead just as Christmas celebrates his birth. Show Hofmann's Easter Morning, Perry 798, or Plockhorst's, Perry 804. Give each pupil a flower and tell this story taken from "Five-Minute Stories," by Laura E. Richards.

The trees were still bare, and the grass brown and sere in the northern city; but the sky was blue and cloudless, and the air warm and soft. On a bench under one of the leafless trees in the Park sat an old man, gray-haired and poorly clad. His eyes were fixed on the ground, and he was thinking of many sorrowful things. Suddenly he heard a little, clear voice saying, "Didn't they give you any flowers?"

He looked up and saw a wee girl standing before him, with her hands full of flowers. She had a round, rosy face and round, blue eyes, and a little round rosebud of a mouth; and she was looking at him very seriously indeed.

"Didn't they give you any flowers?" she repeated. "No, dear," said the old man, gently; "nobody gave me any flowers. Where did you get your pretty posies?"

"In church, of course," said the child. "The minister gives us all flowers. You shall have some of mine," and she took some sprays of lily of the valley and a red rose and laid them in the old man's withered hand. "Does that make you glad?" she asked anxiously. "The minister says everybody must be glad to-day."

"Why must everybody be glad, my little angel?" asked the old man, sadly, "Because Christ the Lord is risen," said the child. "Didn't you know? Don't you know that this is Easter Day?"

The old man smiled, and raised the flowers to his lips and kissed them. "I have been ill, my little angel," he said, "but you have made me almost well again, and I *will* be glad! Christ the Lord is risen indeed."

"Hallelujah!" cried the child, eagerly." "Hallelujah!" echoed the old man, reverently. "Hallelujah," sang the bluebird in the leafless tree. "Hallelujah!" said the whole wide world.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Have you ever read a story, where so many exciting events were happening that you began to fear the hero would perish at the hands of his foes, and then have you turned over the pages to see how it all came out? Was it a relief to know that things turned out all right for him, that he lived and triumphed? And then you went back to where you had left off, did you not, and read on with the same eagerness but with undisturbed pleasure because you knew that no matter what your hero might have to go through, he was all right in the end? We have seen just the beginning of the exciting events that befell Jesus, our mighty Hero, the first of the attacks made upon him by his enemies; to-day we turn over the pages and see how gloriously he triumphed at last; and next week we shall go back to where we left off in the story, assured that no matter what happens, our hero King still lives and reigns.

For Older Pupils. Every year at Easter Jerusalem is crowded with pilgrims, some twenty thousand being the estimated number in recent years. They come from many lands and speak various languages, Russians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, and Greeks being in the majority. The Bible Society distributes many Bibles among these pilgrims. Last year one of the purchasers was a pilgrim who could speak only Turkish, who had stipulated that the colporteur should first read and explain to him the Epistles of St. Paul, which, he said, charmed him. From which one of his epistles is our Easter Lesson taken? What led Paul to write this letter?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I THIS JESUS HATH GOD RAISED UP

Historical Proofs of the Resurrection of Jesus. In this record of the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection there is nothing like fiction. Everything is as prosaic as it can possibly be; not a purple streak or speck of poetic gold. Nothing like philosophy here; not the most distant suspicion of the philosophic mind. It is as bald as a commercial inventory. It is as stern as an affidavit. It is purely matter of fact, arithmetical, the unadorned testimony of witnesses who could not lie nor embellish.

It is often the case that vegetation is not suffered to root itself in solid masonry lest it should prove a peril; not a spray of ivy, not a creeper, not a flower in the crannied wall, but the bastion must stand in naked massiveness and grandeur. So here is no poetic beauty, no philosophic subtlety, no logical argument, simply the naked granite foundation of fact on which the whole fabric of Christianity rests. "If the foundations be destroyed what shall the righteous do?" They may sooner destroy the pillars of the earth and heaven. *W. L. Watkinson*, in *The Quiet Hour.*

Proofs from the Words of Jesus. "I have faith in the future, and I think I see the golden islands, but oh that we had a stouter vessel, or a stronger

word!" Thus cried Socrates in his prison cell in Athens to his disciples when putting out to sea on his last voyage, and what a sad cry it is—the most pathetic cry of antiquity, it has been called—I *think* I see the golden islands, but *Oh that we had* a stouter vessel!

Contrast with these words Jesus' calm words of assurance on that last night with his disciples: I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom: After I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee: In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you: Because I live ye shall live also: I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am ye may be also: I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father. Jesus arose from the dead and brought life and immortality to light; he is for us the stouter vessel, the stronger word that Socrates craved.

Christ is Living. Dr. Dale was once writing an Easter sermon, and, when halfway through, the thought of the risen Lord broke in upon him as it had never done before. "'Christ is alive,' I said to myself; 'alive,' and then I paused. 'Alive,' and then I paused again; 'alive—can that really be true? Living as really as I myself am?' I got up and walked about, repeating 'Christ is living'; 'Christ is living.' At first it seemed strange and hardly true; but at last it came upon me as a burst of sudden glory; yes, Christ is living. It was to me a new discovery. I thought that all along I had believed it, but not until that moment did I feel sure about it. I then said, 'My people shall know it; I shall preach about it again and again until they believe it as I do now.'" For months after, and in every sermon, the living Christ was his one great theme, and there and then began the custom of singing in Carr's Lane on every Sunday morning an Easter hymn. *Marcus Dods,* in *Christ and Man.*

Our Need of the Living Christ. Personally I have no more use for a dead Christ than I have for a molten image. The Christ who once did loving deeds and does them no more, who once spoke words of comfort but has been silent for centuries, means nothing to me. A Christ who could heal the sorrows of body and souls once, but whose power has perished thousands of years ago, is no Christ for me. It is the Christ whose fellowship I can share, and whose presence I can realize in the fellowship of those who love him, that I want, the Christ who in danger says now as once he said, "Fear not, I am with thee," a Christ of whom we can still say, "There stood by me this night one whose I am, and whom I serve," a Christ who, when we have done our best and all that remains is the consciousness of our own impotence, we realize is near us, that is the Christ I want, and that is the Christ my faith to-day acclaims. The "seeing him who is invisible" is the awakening of our soul, the energizing of our efforts, the sustaining of our courage, and that shall one day be the thousandfold reward of our poor service, when we see him as he is, and in complete fellowship shall be made in his likeness. *Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell,* in *A Man's Helpers.*

II What his Death and Rising Mean to us

The Upward Aim to which we are summoned by Christ's Resurrection. There is in a little churchyard in Switzerland a simple inscription on the tomb of one who perished in an Alpine accident, which has always appealed to me with singular force: "He died climbing." He had heard the call of the mountains and lost his life in endeavouring to respond. We have heard the call of the risen Christ, but unlike the climber, we gain our lives in our sustained attempt to respond worthily. "Seek those things that are above" is a call to enjoy the largest possible life, for the very struggle develops latent possibilities and capacities, and each step upward is into fuller liberty and more perfect manhood.

But all this on our part is entirely dependent upon our recognition that the Christ who is above is the Christ also "who is our life." Nothing less than "the power of his resurrection" can ever serve to create and maintain in us this determining attitude.

Self-resolve, however well-intentioned, is altogether inadequate to such a life as that to which we are summoned by Christ's resurrection. Apart from

a new strength of will, a quickened power of vision, and a renewed energy of action—in short, a partaking of the Divine nature—we can never rise to the height of this calling. But these are just the resurrection gifts of abundant life, and these his gifts are contingent upon his government. Easter proclaims Christ to be "the Lord both of the dead and the living"; and only by giving him the place which he claims of sovereign right may we know the power by which such newness of life becomes not merely an aim but a daily-increasing experience. *J. Stuart Holden,* in *Redeeming Vision.*

An Easter Message. When he died and his apostles went forth, their message was, primarily, a message of the resurrection; not merely that this Man had died and come forth from the grave again, but that he had himself possessed an incorruptible life, and that all men possessed in themselves an incorruptible life. The message was carried forward into Greece and Rome, to slaves, to freedmen, to men in bondage, to men who had counted themselves but as machines—to them came the word, You are men, you are children of God, you have in yourselves an immortal, eternal life, you are worthier than you thought you were. The first growth of the Christian church was less a conversion than a resurrection, less a conscious turning away from sin than a waking from unconscious death into conscious life.

The first four centuries of the Christian era were centuries of resurrection. They were a rising of the dead into life. This is the first Easter message. You and I are sons of God. You Christian men, who have long walked in Christian ways, who have long followed Christ, you are sons of God. You who have just begun, you are sons of God. You who are questioning whether you will begin or not, you are sons of God. You who have never thought of joining the church, you who have never thought of being Christians, you who are satisfied to live your present life and be a mere machine for gathering gold or silver or printed paper money, you who measure a man by the amount of money he makes and not by the use he is able to put it to, even you are sons of God. You proud people, you self-satisfied people, you young men who think that there is nothing in life but success, and nothing in success but dollar marks, you are sons of God. There is not a man here so discouraged, so disheartened; not a man so self-conceited—and he is worst of all—who is not a son of God. There is something better in life for you than is bounded by the present horizon. There is something better for you than simply to delve and dig. You are immortal; you are a child of God. You have in you a faith though you do not know it; eyes though you have never opened them; the possibilities of a hope if you could only arouse it; a sleeping and splendid life—oh, that you would but let the Christ this Easter morn awaken it! *Lyman Abbott,* in *The Life that Really Is.*

III Some Easter Experiences

Na Kyia's Easter. "If you go again to the chapel of the foreign devils, I shall punish you severely." "I would rather be punished many, many times than give up going to the chapel," thought Na Kyia as she heard these words of her father. It was a sad little girl who talked with Mrs. Dane, the missionary's wife, at the next meeting where she went to practice her Easter solo. "My father will never, never let me be a Christian," she declared between her sobs; "he is so proud of his position as an alderman, and so strong for the old Chinese religion." "Do not be discouraged, Na Kyia," Mrs. Dane comforted her; "greater miracles have happened than that Alderman Kang should come to our chapel, happily leading his little daughter by the hand!"

When she reached home, her father was waiting for her, and punished her severely. That evening he found her reading. Her eyes were still swollen with weeping, but there was a wonderful expression of peace, even of joy, upon her face. "What is it that you are reading?" he demanded. "It is the book of the true and living God, father." "Throw it away instantly," commanded Mr. Kang. Then he checked himself. "No," he went on; "read to me what you have just been reading to yourself." Eagerly Na Kyia obeyed, and read the Shepherd Psalm.

Every evening after that her father asked Na Kyia to read to him from her Bible, and then he sat and thought, without saying a word. She read the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, and at last the story of the death and resur-

rection of Jesus. "Father," she said when she had finished, "next Sunday is the day when they celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus at the mission chapel. Then some of the girls who have believed on him are going to confess him by receiving the baptism which he commanded. May I be one of them?" "Child, you must decide for yourself," he exclaimed.

On Sunday afternoon, when Na Kyia was all ready to start for the chapel, her father said to her: "I think I will go with you to the chapel; I have a curiosity to see what this baptism is that you are to receive." All looked curiously at Alderman Kang as he entered, but he held up his head proudly, and kept Na Kyia's hand till she led him to a seat and then fluttered away to take her place with other children for the exercises. After the services Alderman Kang arose and facing all the people he spoke: "I wish to say to you who know me so well, and who have heard me say many things against this way, that my feeling toward this mission is changed through witnessing what it has done for my little daughter in my home. Yet I did not come here intending to speak these words. But as I have listened to Na Kyia's song of joy, and have seen her so willing to confess her faith before you all, I am constrained also to let it be known that I am moved by these things, and that I intend at once to look into it more thoroughly."

And Mr. Dane, still holding the hand of Na Kyia, responded earnestly, "The risen Lord of China's millions be praised!" *Adapted from World-Wide Missions.*

A Long-remembered Easter. It was Easter Sunday. A young man who had been contending with himself knelt in his room, that was filled with the odor of an Easter lily, which had been sent him by a friend. He had resolved to put on record his resolution toward the life that has the promise of immortality. He had just read the words of the poet: "Righteousness is immortal." His soul glowed in the consecration. He then took his journal and wrote:

"Resolved, To do nothing that I would not be willing that the whole world should see and know; to say nothing of anyone that I would not be willing that he should hear; and never to carry to the house of God a thought that will not tend to develop a spirit of good influence, and of good-will towards men."

That Easter day was one of progress.

This Easter. How good it would be for us if this bright Easter Day could show us immortality and so set some of us free! There are some things that you are afraid to do, some right word you are afraid to speak, some wasteful or wicked habit you are afraid to give up, some self-culture that you are afraid to undertake, some attempt to be useful in some little enterprising way from which you shrink out of a feeble fear of what people will say about it, out of a fear of the little world. You would get rid of that fear instantly if you realized your immortality and stood in the midst of the great world of your eternal life, as the mists that have hung thick and damp in the valleys scatter and are lost as soon as they struggle up into the free air above the hilltops. What is there in scorn or criticism, that dies the day it is born, that can terrify, however it may pain, the man who is to live forever? He is free. He has entered into the glorious liberty of the children of God. *Phillips Brooks, Sermons.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

To you the Master shall be nigh
For you he has been raised on high. *Goethe.*

To realize that we are "risen with Christ" lends to all life a sanctifying force which manifests itself in every sphere and realm. *Hugh Black.*

The Lord is risen indeed,
He is here for your love, for your need—
Not in the grave, nor the sky,
But here where men live and die. *Richard Watson Gilder.*

As this round globe and all that it inherits arose out of empty space, so has Christendom arisen out of the empty grave of our Lord. *W. L. Watkinson.*

The Lord is risen indeed: we must remember that after Easter; Christ stays

risen; Easter joy is one of the things which is never done. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

He who perpetually works the miracle of the resurrection in nature will not fail to effect that of his people. *W. L. Watkinson.*

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. *Rev.* 1.18.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

After his resurrection Jesus appeared to many people, even to five hundred at one time, but in each case he manifested himself only to those who loved him and longed to see him. He did not appear to Pilate nor Caiaphas nor the Sanhedrin nor the rabble of Jerusalem. So it is now; he does not manifest himself to those who neglect him or are indifferent to him.

Let us ask ourselves the question Browning asks in "Christmas Eve and Easter Day":

> One thing
> Remained, however,—one that tasked
> My soul to answer; and I asked
> Fairly and frankly, what might be
> That History, that Faith, to me?

Has our belief in the risen Lord affected our lives? Has our faith that because he lives we shall live also borne fruit in the kind of lives we are now living? Or do we live as though there were no connection between this present life and the life to come, as though we had no certainty that our character here determined our destiny hereafter?"

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Whether it be I or they.
2. How should Easter be celebrated?
3. The living Christ. See *The Outlook,* March 5, 1910.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Read the story told in John of the curing of the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda, which occurred about this time. (Jn. 5. 1-9.) 2. What does Dt. 23.25 say about helping oneself to growing ears of corn? 3. What were some of the ridiculous rules made by the rabbis in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath? (Clipping, p. 154.) 4. Find in the Old Testament the story cited in regard to David. (1 S. 21.1-6.) 5. What was the law in regard to the disposal of the showbread? (Lev. 24.5-9.) 6. What other claim besides that of being Lord of the Sabbath did Jesus make at this time? (Mt. 12.6.) 7. What illustration did Jesus use in connection with the healing of the withered hand, as recorded in another Gospel? (Mt. 12.11-12.) 8. Where in the Bible is the Sabbath called the Lord's Day? (Rev. 1.10.) 9. What does Luke somewhere say was a habit of Jesus on the Sabbath? (Lk. 4.16.) 10. What is the meaning of the word *Gospel?* 11. Which Gospel writers were apostles? 12. What special qualifications had the other two Evangelists for their work? (Clipping, p. 26.)

Questions to think about. 1. Which one of the commandments is about the keeping of the Sabbath? Where is it found? How does it read? 2. Wherein lay the wrong of plucking ears of corn, according to the Pharisees? (Clipping, p. 153.) 3. At what time of year must our story have occurred? (Harvest time.) 4. What is the application of David's case to that of the disciples? 5. What deed of mercy had Jesus done on the Sabbath earlier than this? (Lesson IX.) 6. How many times in our lessons so far studied this year has Jesus proved that he knew the Scriptures? 7. Why do we keep the first day of the week instead of the seventh as our "Sabbath"? 8. Why do we need the Sabbath? 9. What are some things which you think right to do on our Sabbath? 10. What are some things which you think wrong for you to do on that day? 11. Are some of these things right for some other people?

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, page 17, Introduction.

LESSON II—APRIL 14

THE USE OF THE SABBATH

Golden Text

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath. Mark 2.27

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 2.23—3.6 The Use of the Sabbath. **T.** Matt. 12.1-13. Doing Good on the Sabbath. **W.** Ex. 16.23-30. A Day of Rest. **T.** Neh. 13.15-22. Sabbath-breaking Forbidden. **F.** Luke 13.10-17. A Work of Mercy. **S.** Ps. 92. A Sabbath Song. **S.** John 9.1-16. Jesus Lord of the Sabbath. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 2.23—3.6 READ Mt. 12.1-14; Luke 6.1-11 COMMIT vv 27, 28

23 And it came to pass, that he was going on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears. 24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? 25 And he said unto them, Did ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he, and they that were with him? 26 How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the showbread, which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him? 27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 28 so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath.

3 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered. 2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. 3 And he saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth. 4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace. 5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored. 6 And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

23. *Going through the grainfields.* There were no fences, and the public paths led through the fields of grain.—*Began, as they went, to pluck.* Greek, *began to make their way plucking,* RVm.—*Pluck the ears.* This is lawful, as Dt. 27.25 shows: When thou comest into thy neighbor's standing grain, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing grain. The ears were either barley or wheat.

24. *Not lawful.* They held it unlawful because it was the Sabbath. "He that reaps on the Sabbath, though never so little, is guilty, and to pluck the ears of grain is a kind of reaping," declared Maimonides.

25-26. *Did ye never read.* In 1 S. 21.6. "Note the tinge of irony. In all your minute study of the letter of the Scripture, did you never take heed to that page? The principle on which the priest at Nob let the hungry fugitives devour the sacred bread, was the subordination of ceremonial law to men's necessities. The Pharisees had pored over the Old Testament all their lives, but it would have been long before they had found such a doctrine as this in it" (*Maclaren*).—*The house of God.* The tabernacle.—*When Abiathar was high priest.* Some ancient authorities read *in the days of Abiathar the high priest,* RVm. "A well-known difficulty, for Ahimelech seems to have been the high priest at this time. It is not to be regarded as a mere blunder, but as a

deliberate inference from the somewhat conflicting data of the Old Testament. For whereas in 1 S. 21.1 Ahimelech appears as high priest, and is shortly afterwards slain by Saul for his friendship with David (1 S. 22.16), in 2 S. 8.17; 1 Ch. 18.16; 24.6 he appears long after his supposed death, officiating in the priesthood together with Zadok, and is represented as the son, not the father, of Abiathar. The expression is, therefore, quite in harmony with one of the two conflicting Old Testament accounts" (*Dummelow*).—*The showbread.* On every Sabbath twelve fresh loaves of bread were placed in rows upon a table in the Holy Place(as symbol of communion of God with men) and the old loaves taken away and eaten by the priests. Though this was probably an instance of Sabbath-breaking, Jesus uses it as an instance of the setting aside of ceremonial law for a good and sufficient reason. David was fleeing from Saul and was in need of food.

27-28. See the additional instance narrated by Matthew, Mt. 12.5-7.—*The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.* The Sabbath is given to man as a privilege, not as a burden.—*Son of man.* Jesus' phrase for himself, the Messiah.—*Is Lord even of the Sabbath.* If I permit my disciples to pluck grain on the Sabbath, you have no right to condemn them. He who declares he is Lord of the Sabbath and greater than the temple (Mt. 12.6) claims to be divine: this, more than the miracle of healing, must have aroused the ire of the Pharisees.

3.1-2. *He entered again into the synagogue.* On another Sabbath, Lk. 6.6—*Hand withered.* It was shriveled and useless.—*They.* The scribes and Pharisees, Lk. 6.7.—*Might accuse him.* "This fellow and his companions breaking the Sabbath again, and within so short a time of the last offence, when they pulled the ears of grain!"

3-6. See the additional instance given in Mt. 12.11-12.—*Stand forth.* Greek, *arise into the midst,* RVm.—*Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good?* According to the rabbinical rules, it was lawful only when life was in danger.—*They held their peace.* They were silent.—*Herodians.* A political party who were strong supporters of the dynasty of Herod. See page 23.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

27. *The Sabbath was made for man.* It was "made" for man, and its maker was God. Just as God, having planted the appetite for food in us, has made food for that appetite, so God, having given us a nature requiring a Sabbath, has also made a Sabbath to meet that requirement. The Sabbath did not come by accident: it neither sprang out of the ground, nor is it a device of mere human experience. It is a divine institution, designed to bring relief and refreshment. *J. G. K. McClure,* in *What were Christ's Sabbath Principles.*

3.5. *And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved.* The anger was for the hardening, the compassion was for the hardness. His feelings in looking on sin were like a piece of woven stuff with a pattern on either side, on one the fiery threads—the wrath; on the other the silvery tints of sympathetic pity: a warp of wrath, a woof of sorrow. *Alexander Maclaren.*

5. *Stretch forth thy hand.* Even if we allow that desire to rectify Pharisaic notions concerning the weekly rest had some place in Christ's motives, the admission is quite compatible with the view that love was his supreme motive. In those Sabbathic miracles Christ's love was simply overflowing the embankment of custom. It was daring to do well when current opinion said it should do nothing. It was only one of several ways in which the deep, strong, original love of the Son of Man set at defiance conventional limits. *A. B. Bruce,* in *The Miraculous Elements of the Gospels.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

23. *His disciples began to pluck the corn.* Both he and the disciples were hungry, for no Jew would break his fast till after the morning service at the synagogue, or take supper till after the evening service; but he had sanctioned two offences against the Sabbath laws. The plucking of the ears was a kind of reaping, and the rubbing was a kind of grinding or threshing. Besides, it was required that all food should be prepared on Friday before sunset, and

the rubbing was a preparation. On any other day there would have been no cause of blame; but to break the Sabbath rather than suffer hunger for a few hours was guilt worthy of stoning. Was it not their boast that Jews were known over the world by their readiness to die rather than break the holy day? Every one had grand stories of fidelity to it. The Jewish sailor had refused, even when threatened with death, to touch the helm a moment after the sun had set on Friday, though a storm was raging; and had not thousands allowed themselves to be butchered rather than lift a weapon in self-defense on the Sabbath? The "new doctrine" of Jesus would turn the world upside down if not stopped. *Geikie, The Life of Christ.*

24. *Why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?* The holy day began with sunset on Friday and ended with sunset on Saturday, but as the disappearance of the sun was the only mark of time, its commencement was different on a hill-top and in a valley. If it was cloudy, the going of the hens to roost was the signal. The beginning and the close of the Sabbath was announced by trumpet-blasts in Jerusalem and in the various towns.

Announcing the Sabbath

No feature of the Jewish system was so marked as its extraordinary strictness in the outward observance of the Sabbath, as a day of entire rest. The scribes had elaborated, from the command of Moses, a vast array of prohibitions and injunctions, covering the whole of social, individual, and public life, and carried it to the extreme of ridiculous caricature. The quantity of food that might be carried on the Sabbath from one place to another was duly settled. It must be less in bulk than a dried fig; if of honey only as much as would anoint a wound; if water, as much as would make eye-salve; if paper, as much as would be put in a phylactery; if ink, as much as would form two letters. All food must be prepared, all vessels washed, and all lights kindled, before sunset. The money girdle must be taken off, and all tools laid aside. "On Friday, before the beginning of the Sabbath," said one law, "no one must go out of his house with a needle or a pen, lest he forget to lay them aside before the Sabbath opens. Every one must search his pockets at that time, to see that there is nothing left in them with which it is forbidden to go out on the Sabbath."

In an insincere age such excessive instructions led to constant evasions by Pharisees and Sadducees alike. To escape the restrictions which limited a journey on the Sabbath to two thousand cubits from a town or city, they carried food on Friday evening to a spot that distance beyond the walls, and assumed by a fiction, that this made that spot also their dwelling. They could thus, on the Sabbath, walk the full distance to it, and an equal distance beyond it, this journey being only the legal distance from the fictitious place of residence! Condensed from the *Life of Christ,* by *Dr. Geikie.*

The Jew in Palestine to-day, writes a native of that land, would rather have his hand cut off than receive money, open a business letter, or transact any business or do any work such as lighting a lamp or a fire, making a bed or warming his food, on the Sabbath.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Last Sunday we studied the records of the Resurrection of Jesus. To-day, in our study of the use of the Sabbath, we are reminded of another record of the Resurrection, for the Lord's Day has become, not the Jewish Sabbath or seventh day, but the Christian Sunday or first day of the week, because of the fact that on the first day of the week Christ rose from the dead. This first day is repeatedly named the day of worship and assembly in the Apostolic Church. At Troas the Christians gathered to break bread "upon the first day

of the week;" Paul bids the Corinthians put by their contributions "for the saints" "upon the first day of the week." In Justin Martyr's "First Apology," written about A. D. 150, we read that "We all have one common meeting on the Sunday because it is the First Day, on which God, having changed darkness and matter, made the world, and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead." Alcuin, writing at the close of the eighth century, says that "The observance of the former Sabbath has been transferred very fittingly to the Lord's Day by the custom and consent of Christian people."

Review lessons XI and XII of last quarter. In these lessons we saw the opposition of the scribes. To-day we see the deadliness of the hatred toward Jesus. He blasphemeth, said the scribes within themselves when Jesus forgave the sins and healed the disease of the palsied man. How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? they questioned, when they saw Jesus at Matthew's feast. Why do not thy disciples fast? again they murmured.

About this time, in the spring of the year 28 A. D. Jesus attended the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, and there on the Sabbath cured the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda, bidding him take up his bed and walk (as recorded in the gospel of John). To the man that was cured the Jews said: It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. And they persecuted Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath. And they sought to kill him, because he not only brake the Sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God.

On his return to Galilee, in just what place we do not know, Jesus and the Pharisees had two further controversies regarding what was lawful to do on the Sabbath, our present lesson. Assign paragraphs 88, 35 and 36, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

In teaching a class of very young pupils it will be wise to omit verses 25-28, as their telling necessitates so much explanation. Show Tissot's picture No. 39 or Dore's, Brown No. 344. The second part of the lesson with its great truth, It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, will be your main theme. Teach that on Sunday we rightly come to church and Sunday-school to worship God and to learn how to live as he would have us live on all seven days of the week. Let your pupils learn this Bible verse: This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it, and also these words of Longfellow

> Take the Sunday with you through the week
> And sweeten all the other days.

Tell them about a Sunday-school where not one of the pupils is over eight years old, a school which meets in Yokohama, "my ragged Sunday-school," as the missionary calls it. He was expecting to be away for a few Sundays and told the scholars there would be no school until he returned. But he did not get away as soon as he planned, and the next Sunday he thought, of course, no one would come and stayed at home himself, trying to keep cool, for it was a very hot day. His house was next door to the Sunday-school building, and soon he heard a hymn. "Can it be possible that the children have come after all?" he asked himself as he listened. Yes, those were their voices. They sang another hymn, and another, and then they repeated the Lord's prayer, and three or four of the Commandments, as far as they had learned them, and then sang again and went home. "I wonder how many of our little American children would think of doing that?" the missionary asked. What do your pupils think about this?

Give each pupil a copy of the rhyme on page 165 to learn before next Sunday.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When Loh Saen became a Christian he learned that he must keep Sunday holy, but the days were all so much alike that he could not tell when Sunday came around. So he made a calendar for himself. He took a board and wrote at the top "Something to remember; rest on the Lord's Day." And then underneath he made seven holes and fastened back of them

seven strings. On Sunday he pulled the first string through the hole; on Monday he drew the first one back and pulled number two forward; and so on until number one again was drawn through and he knew that the Lord's Day had again come around. And then he knew how to keep the Lord's Day holy. We have no such trouble in knowing when it is Sunday, but we often do have trouble in knowing what it is right for us to do on that day. The Pharisees thought they knew how the day should be kept, and they found fault with Jesus' disciples for something they did on the Sabbath. We have great reason to be glad of this, for it led Jesus to defend his disciples, and what he then said is our guide now in knowing what we should do on the Lord's Day. What did the disciples do which the Pharisees said was not lawful? Why did they say this was wrong?

For Older Pupils. Lead your pupils to talk about what is rightful and what wrongful conduct on Sunday, letting them express their thoughts freely. Do not settle the question thus raised; tell them that after a study of Jesus' principles of Sabbath observance they may themselves wish to change certain of their views. "The Bible was written to tell us what to do on Sundays," said a smart lad in answer to a teacher's question as to the purpose of the Scriptures. But the Bible has very little to say about the kind of conduct especially right for Sunday, it is the Book that tells us how to live on every day of the week. Yet there is a commandment about keeping the day holy—which Commandment is it? What does it say? If we had only that Commandment we should often be in doubt as to what we may do on Sundays, but we are able to interpret that Commandment by a few words which Jesus spoke about the use of the Sabbath.

After a discussion of the lesson and of the principles Jesus gave, submit to your class one or more of the problems in the third Topic. Do not fail to allow time at the close of the lesson for a second discussion of the problems your pupils raised at the beginning of the lesson period, and this time take a guiding part.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Principles Which Should Regulate Sabbath Observance

"Rules make Pharisees; Principles make Christians." The great majority of people in the Catholic Church find their freedom from the need of thinking and deciding about many a course of action a great relief. Thus saith the priest, Thus saith the Pope, settle matters for them. And there are multitudes in the Protestant denominations that have much of this dislike for doing their own thinking. They wish that Jesus had given exact rules for everything, that they might say: "Thus and so saith Jesus, this thing I may do and this thing I may not do." But Jesus did not so teach. He never gave minute rules. He gave great principles for our guidance, and left to us the application of these principles. And for this very reason, his words are as applicable to present-day situations and present-day problems as they were to those people of Galilee nineteen hundred years ago.

The rabbis said, You shall do no work on the Sabbath day, and then they specified thirty-nine classes of forbidden work and under each gave countless sub-divisions. For example, to carry a burden was work, and among the burdens specified was a handkerchief, which could only be carried if tied around the knee and called a garter! Jesus said: The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath; It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day; I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.

Jesus did not abolish the fourth Commandment. Both he and the Pharisees agreed that the Sabbath was a day holy unto the Lord. They agreed as to the sanctity of the day; they differed as to what would make the day sacred.

The Sabbath was made for Man and not Man for the Sabbath. The tendency of all governments is to exalt law above individual human interests. Jesus showed that men are greater than institutions. Jesus made no protest against the rabbinic rules, false as they were; he merely exalted the interests of man, and laid down principles by which man was to think for himself. And the rabbis knew that these principles would undermine their authority, just as

the Pope knows that a Roman Catholic priest, who says nothing against the Pope's power and authority nor against any part of the Roman ecclesiastical system, but who teaches his people to think for themselves, is nevertheless surely undermining that system.

The Pharisees would have the disciples suffer hunger on the Sabbath day rather than transgress one of the rabbinical rules. Jesus points out to them that the tabernacle and its regulations, like the Sabbath and its regulations, were sacred, but rather than suffer hunger David had transgressed and had eaten the showbread which legally only the priests might eat. By citing this example Jesus silenced his opponents, and illustrated for us his general principle that it is of greater importance to meet the needs of men than to regard the claims of sacred institutions. If the two come into conflict, man is greater than an institution. It is a special case under the general principle that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. It means that the Sabbath was given to us as a boon, not imposed upon us as a burden.

I desire Mercy and not Sacrifice. In Matthew's account of the first Sabbath incident, he adds these words of Jesus: If ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. Canon Tristram gives a sad incident which shows to what lengths Jews since Christ's day have been careful to observe sacrifice at the expense of mercy. A few years before he wrote a fire had broken out on the Sabbath day in a house in the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem. It being unlawful among them to kindle a fire on that day, they interpret this prohibition to imply that fire may not be touched; and thus there was not one who would make the slightest effort to put out the fire or rescue the inmates. Three beautiful young girls were burned to death, when a very little exertion might have saved them all! One of the women, on being afterwards reproached for this hideous tragedy, replied that it was a sacrifice acceptable to God, who would reward them for having allowed their dear ones to perish, rather than break this commandment.

It is Lawful to do Good on the Sabbath Day. Jesus used the Sabbath to aid others. He actually healed the diseased. By so doing he opened a thousand possibilities of misunderstanding. But he knew, as all thoughtful men know, that when it comes to the actual use of the Sabbath by different persons, misunderstanding is unavoidable. We say: "Christ healed disease on the Sabbath, therefore it is right for physicians to heal on the Sabbath." But just as soon as we have drawn this inference from Christ's healing on the Sabbath, other inferences that seem perfectly logical are drawn: that the nurse, the druggist, the car driver who takes us to the druggist's, the switchman who directs the car, the policeman who guards the streets, the dairyman who supplies milk to the patient, the scores of men and women in our complicated and interdependent society who contribute to the desired end of healing, are all justified by Christ's principle in their labors on the Sabbath.

Does all this mean that Sabbath observance ceases? If by Sabbath observance we mean any hard and fast rule of what may and what may not be done on the Sabbath, the answer must be "Yes." But if by Sabbath observance we mean the retention of the day for high and noble purposes, the answer must be that the day may be just as much a day of blessedness now as ever. We can never expect harmonious agreement as to the deeds of mercy and necessity that are appropriate to the Sabbath, and I am resolved to be compassionate of persons asked to do physical or intellectual labor, to spare them all work as far as I can, to have a heart of love and a hand of help and a word of cheer for them all the day through. *J. G. K. McClure,* in an article in the *Sunday School Times.*

II Deeds Which Hallow the Sabbath

Rest and Worship. That Sunday morning is well spent which is passed in God's house, at Sunday-school and at morning service. On the Jewish Sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue as was his custom, we read, a custom of worship which should be every one's. Mr. Ashley is an Englishman who is greatly interested in seeing the Sunday closing of the butchers' shops in London. One recent Sunday he marched into church accompanied by every butcher of Green-

wich and Deptford to give thanks to God for the rest day. "There has been no prouder day in my life," he told a correspondent of the Sunday School Chronicle, to whom he gave the reason for his deep interest in the Sunday closing movement. He was himself a tobacconist and news-agent, and formerly kept his shop open on Sunday. But one day his little girl came home from Sunday-school and said: "Daddy, how is it I go to Sunday-school and learn that it is wrong not to keep holy the Sabbath Day, and you tell me not to spend my money on Sunday, while all the time you open your shop and ask people to spend their money there?" "This simple statement of my illogical position floored me," said Mr. Ashley, "and to be above-board with my child I had to do one of two things—take her away from the school or put up my shutters. Then my own early training, hidden for so long, came to the surface, and at the bidding of a child, when I felt the world would deal hardly with me for my action, bang went the door of my shop, to open again no more on God's holy day."

You do not have to make any such sacrifice in order to attend church. Do you perhaps excuse yourself from going on the ground that the day should be one of rest and you are "too tired to go to church"? Listen to the Rev. Robert J. Burdette's plain talk. "That's sheer nonsense. There isn't a place on the continent so restful as the church. You are going to lie around the house all day; snooze in a hammock; loll in a rocking chair; go to sleep over a book. That isn't resting, that's loafing. Tell yourself honestly—you like to think you are honest—did you ever in all your life see a loafer who looked rested? Resting is the hardest work in the world, when you make work out of it.

About a year ago, I stopped in a Boston street to watch a group of laborers. It was noon hour. They had been at work all the morning digging a sewer excavation. They had eaten their dinners from the little tin pails and now they were 'resting.' Some of them were pitching quoits, and others were putting the shot, with a great round boulder. They were workingmen 'resting.' And sitting on the curbstone watching them—too lazy to even stand up and look at them; their lazy chins resting on their lazy hands, and their lazy elbows supported on their lazy knees, were the loafers who had been watching them work all the morning. These fellows were too tired even to join the games by which the workers rested themselves.

You have no need to loaf all day Sunday. Two hours in church; two hours of the quiet; the sermon; the reading; the uplift which comes from the new channels into which your thought, your mind is led, will rest you more, physically, morally, intellectually, than will all the day spent in trying to 'rest.'"

Hospitality. That Sunday noon is well spent in which our home and our repast are shared with a stranger, a friend in need, a lonely acquaintance. Bishop Hughes in an address mentioned the death of a man noted for his influence over young men. All men who had become Christians through his influence had been asked to accompany his body to its burial in a special car chartered for the funeral party, and a hundred and fifty of them had packed the car in his honor. And the secret of this man's power for good, the Bishop said, lay in this early resolution which he had made: "I cannot speak in prayer meeting. I cannot do many other things in Christian service, but I can put two extra plates on my dinner table every Sunday and invite two young men who are away from home to break bread with me." This practice he had continued for thirty years, and it was a great company of young men who had sat down before the extra dinner plates and had been led by his friendship and example to know him who went about doing good.

Rejoice and be Glad. That Sunday afternoon is well spent which, like all the rest of the day, has been a day of rest and gladness, not a day of idleness and gloom, nor yet of feverish gaiety. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it, sang the Psalmist of old, and in that spirit we should keep the day now.

III Some Sabbath Problems

Is Dr. Wilfred Grenfell Right? In a book entitled "Labrador: the Country and the People," Dr. Grenfell says: American fishing vessels from Maine are

the finest that come to Labrador, and are always welcome. Our own humble vessels look poor and sorry beside them. Their crews are a generous, open-handed crowd of men, and only for one thing do we regret their advent, and that is due to their indifference to what we consider the laws of God. They go fishing and working on Sundays among our people, who, though poorer and far more needy of material wealth, are wise enough to know that life does not consist in the abundance of things man possesses. The joy of life on our coast comes of a peace of mind due to a real faith in God's Fatherhood and our sonship, and from every high ideal realized on that premise. Without any theories it is the simplest "simple life." If ever by elimination of their faith, or by the introduction of the "habits of civilization" our people are deprived of that faith, life would be little short of a purgatory to be endured. So strongly do our people feel on this matter of keeping Sunday strictly for rest, that one of our laws runs that "No person shall, between the hours of twelve o'clock on Saturday night and twelve o'clock on Sunday night, take or catch in any manner whatsoever, any herring, caplin, squid, or any other bait fish, or set or put out any contrivance whatsoever for taking them"—just such a law as prevailed one hundred years ago about salmon-catching in Ireland. Oddly enough, the law does not prevent the catching of cod themselves, so we cannot prevent the long lines being hauled by our cousins from "civilization." When remonstrated with, however, they have almost always shown enough good feeling to give way to the wishes and customs of our people.

Are these Men Right? Mr. Weston, "the apostle of walking" who has achieved so much in his chosen line, having the greatest pedestrian record in the world, "never walks on Sundays." When he made his trip across the continent many people said, "How much sooner he could have got there if only he had walked on Sundays!" We do not think so, commented a New York newspaper. We believe that his extraordinary task was accomplished not in spite of but because of his resting on Sundays. That feature of Mr. Weston's work commends itself to those who believe in a religious observance of the first day of the week, as does Mr. Weston himself. It likewise goes far to confirm the belief in a regular weekly day of rest. It will be recalled that last year the French government, not at all on ecclesiastical or spiritual grounds, but purely on those of natural and material necessity, enacted an exceptionally strict Sunday observance law. More and more the world is growing in recognition of the practical wisdom of the Fourth Commandment.

When Mr. Wilbur Wright was trying to make his trial flight in the Hudson-Fulton celebration, the weather was unfavorable until Sunday came. That day was ideal for the purpose, and it looked probable that it would be his only opportunity during the celebration. Multitudes of those who did not know him were expecting him to make his flight that day. But Mr. Wright quietly said that he never had taken his machine out on Sunday, and he should not do so under any circumstances. He waited till Monday and then made his successful flight.

What should this Young Man do? A college student in Pennsylvania once wrote to the Editor of the Sunday-school Times for advice. He was prominent in Sunday-school and other lines of Christian work, and his conscience told him that he ought not to work on the Lord's Day, and at the same time he feared he was overscrupulous. The work in question was an occasional Sunday evening task made necessary in order to get out on Monday morning the daily college paper on which he was doing editorial work. The daily had made itself indispensable to the existence of true college spirit, and an editorial position was highly prized by the undergraduates. In reply, the Editor warned the student against two possible dangers. On the one hand, there was the danger of dulling the keen edge of his conscience, which means, if continued in, breaking down his conscience and character, by entering upon a course concerning the right of which he was not wholly and conscientiously clear. On the other hand, there was the danger of rendering himself inefficient and thereby greatly hindering his usefulness to God and man by attempting to conform his actions to impossible standards that are not demanded nor authorized by the principles of Christ. Among the considerations given him to weigh were the following: Sunday labor is not necessarily Sabbath-breaking. The Sab-

bath may be as properly observed in work as in rest,—when it is our duty to work on that day. This principle was stated by Jesus. Moreover, the college world is only a miniature of the outside world, and many details of its life are identical, in spirit and in importance to its welfare, with similar details of the world outside. The question confronting this student, therefore, seems to resolve itself into two factors: has the Monday newspaper a proper place in present-day life; and is the opportunity for service on a college paper, with its heavy demands, likely to result in the largest possible efficiency for the time and energy expended?

This much may be said for the Monday newspaper: It is a part of the whole range of the so-called secular side of present-day life which runs, regularly and properly, from Monday morning to Saturday night, and which cannot feasibly be intermitted any more than can the postal system, or the maintenance of hotels, or the Sunday heating in winter of places of business in preparation for Monday's work, or a host of other details of labor whereby Sunday is inseparably connected with the life and activity of Monday. Sunday ought to be and is a rest-day for the majority of God's people in Christian lands; but Sunday will probably always have to be a time of work, in part or in whole, for many of God's people, as long as church life is conducted on Sunday, and Saturday's labors are resumed by the majority on Monday morning.

Was the President of Cornell University Right? He protested against using Sunday for the discussion of athletic and social matters and said to his students: "The observance of Sunday is the temporal sign that man belongs not only to time, but to eternity. I earnestly hope that Sunday may be observed as a day of physical rest and spiritual meditation."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Worship rests the soul as sleep rests the body. *Hugh Black.*

The Sabbath is necessary, not because it is commanded; but it is commanded because it is necessary. *F. W. Robertson.*

Apparently some men would rather save a law of nature than a human life. *W. F. McDowell.*

The importance for man and beast of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of Christian people, and a due regard for the divine will, demand that Sunday labor in the army and navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity. *Abraham Lincoln.*

To escape a blue Monday
You must spend well your Sunday.

You keep the Sabbath in imitation of God's rest: do, by all manner of means, and keep also the rest of the week in imitation of God's work. *Ruskin.*

That Sabbath is best spent which is spent in loving service of our fellows, and in that fellowship with God which brings rest to the soul. *J. D. Jones.*

What makes a man more of a man is a Christian use of the Sabbath; but a man is not more of a man when he is undevout, ungirt, or torpid. *Francis Greenwood Peabody.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

As we meet in our class on the first day of the week, let us not forget that we are thereby honoring him who on the first day of the week triumphed over death.

What definite thing have you resolved to do that will make your Sundays of use for the better things of life, of more value to yourself or to others?

Here is a pledge that is being widely adopted in England: Believing as I do, that the great principles which underlie the due observance of Sunday are public worship and rest, I resolve to do all I can to discourage, as far as possible, such employments on Sundays as would prevent either myself, my servants, or others for whom I am responsible, from being able to carry out these principles. Will you not keep this pledge?

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

On the Sabbath day Jesus and his disciples were going through the fields of grain and the disciples began to pluck and eat the ears. The watching Pharisees saw this, and complained to Jesus that his disciples were doing what on the Sabbath was unlawful. It was a ceremonial law of the rabbis that the disciples had violated, and Jesus defended them by citing from the Scriptures a ceremonial violation, that of David and the men with him, who had entered the tabernacle and eaten the showbread, which lawfully only the priests could eat. Against the claims of what they deemed sacred observance of the sacred day, he set the claims of hungry men, and drew his great principle that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, and that the Son of man is lord even of the Sabbath.

On another Sabbath Jesus met in the synagogue a man with a wasted hand and again the suspicious Pharisees watched to see if he would be guilty of healing on the Sabbath. Calling the man out before them, Jesus challenged them with rapid questions: Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? What could they do but keep silent! And he looked upon them with both grief and anger, for he read their rebellious thoughts, and then he turned to the afflicted man and bade him stretch forth his hand. At his word, the man did what he had long been powerless to do, and his hand was restored to health. And the Pharisees united with the Herodians in counsel as to how they might compass Jesus' death.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Necessary and unnecessary Sunday work.
2. Sunday amusements. Most of those who work recognize that the Sabbath is a physical necessity; they have yet to learn that it is also a spiritual necessity.
3. Five days shalt thou labor. See article with this title in *Harper's Weekly* for May 7, '10.
4. Which is better, Puritanical severity or Continental laxity in keeping the Lord's Day?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Where are the provinces and cities mentioned in 7-8? (Clipping, p. 165.) 2. What does Mk. 6.56 say was the result of the touching of Jesus by the afflicted?—3. Where are other lists of the disciples given? (Mt. 10.2-4; Lk. 6.13-16; Acts 1.13.) 4. In all the lists, whose name always stands first in the first group of four? Why? 5. Who always stands first in the second group of four? 6. Who in the third group? 7. Which one is always named last? Why? 8. What does the word Cananæan mean? (Clipping, p. 163.) 9. Make a table of four columns; place in the first column a list of the twelve disciples; in the second the places from which they came; in the third, the occupation of each as far as is known; in the fourth, some one thing that we can learn about each. (See Subject Index of your Bible.) 10. What other disciples did Jesus have according to Lk. 10.1 and 1 Cor. 15.6? 11. When was it said that the people took knowledge of Peter and John that they had been with Jesus? (Look for the word *knowledge* in the Concordance in the back of your Bible.) 12. Which are the Synoptic Gospels and why are they so-called? (Clipping, p. 26.) 13. What are the chief differences between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel? (Clipping, p. 26.)

Questions to think about. 1. Learn the list of the twelve disciples. 2. Which were the three favorite disciples of Jesus? 3. Which was the disciple spoken of as the "one whom Jesus loved?" 4. Have these disciples been called before? (Lesson IX, 1st Quar., and clipping, p. 164.) 5. What did Jesus mean by calling the disciples "the salt of the earth?" 6. "The light of the world?" 7. What was *the* bushel? (Clipping, p. 164.) 8. How can we let our light shine?

Note Book Work. See page 17, Suggestions to Teachers, Introduction.

LESSON III—APRIL 21

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE TWELVE

Golden Text

Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit. John 15.16.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 3.7-19. The Twelve Apostles Appointed. **T.** Matt. 5.13-16. Disciples and the World. **W.** John 1.35-42. The First Believers. **T.** Matt. 10.16-25. The Apostles Forewarned. **F.** Matt. 10.28-33. The Apostles Encouraged. **S.** Acts 2.22-36. The Apostles' Message. **S.** Acts 26.9-23. The Call of Paul. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 3.7-19; Mt. 5.13-16 READ Mt. 10.2-4; Luke 6.13-16 COMMIT vv 14, 15

Mk. 7 And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judæa, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him. 9 And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him: 10 for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. 11 And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12 And he charged them much that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would: and they went unto him. 14 And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out demons: 16 and Simon he surnamed Peter: 17 and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and them he surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder: 18 and Andrew and Philip, and Bartholomew and Matthew, and Thomas, and James, the *son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Cananæan, 19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

Mt. 13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. 16 Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good work, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

7-8. *The sea.* Sea of Galilee.—*From Galilee...Sidon.* Note how far the fame of Jesus had extended, and see the Geographical Background.—*What great things he did.* Or, *all the things that he did,* RVm.

10-12. *Plagues.* Greek, *scourges,* RVm.—*Pressed.* Greek, *fell,* RVm.—*That they might touch him.* As many as touched him were made whole, Mk. 6.56.—*Unclean spirits.* See page 105.—*Saying.* See page 105. *The Son of God.* That is, the Messiah.—*Charged them much.* Popular enthusiasm was dangerous to his cause, for it might lead to an outbreak.

13-14. *Goeth up into the mountain.* To pray, and he continued all night in prayer to God, Lk. 6.12.—*Twelve.* Some ancient authorities add *whom also he named apostles.* See Lk. 6.12; compare Mk. 6.30, RVm. "The number twelve was suggested by the number of the Jewish patriarchs. The apostles were to be the patriarchs or spiritual ancestors of the new Israel."

16-19. See page 167. *Simon he surnamed Peter. Kephas, a rock,* in Aramaic; this name he received at his first call, Jn. 1.43.—*James.* Or, *Jacob,* RVm.—

Bartholomew. Called Nathanael, Jn. 1.45; 21.2.—*Matthew.* Matthew adds in his Gospel, *the publican.* Called also Levi.—*James the son of Alphæus.* Called James the less in Mark 15.40.—*Thaddæus.* Lebbæus whose surname was Thaddæus, Mt. 10.3. Called Judas of James, Lk. 6.16, and Judas not Iscariot, Jn. 14.22.—*Simon the Cananæan.* Or, *Zealot:* see Lk. 6.15; Acts 1.13, RVm. "The Zealots were a sect founded by Judas of Gamala, who headed the opposition to the census of Quirinius 6 or 7 A. D. They bitterly resented the domination of Rome, and would fain have hastened with the sword the fulfilment of the Messianic hope. During the great rebellion and the siege of Jerusalem their fanaticism made them terrible opponents, not only to the Romans, but to other factions among their own countrymen."—*Judas Iscariot.* Iscariot is literally *man of Kerioth,* a village near Hebron.—*Betrayed him.* Or, *delivered him up,* RVm.

Mt. 5.13. *Ye are the salt of the earth.* Compare Mk. 9.50; Lk. 14.34, 35. Salt seasons food and preserves it from corruption; the disciples are to be the salt of society, purifying it. "For the whole body nothing is better than salt and sun" (*Pliny*).—*If the salt have lost its savor.* See Light from Oriental Life.—*Wherewith shall it be salted?* They must beware lest they become like all the rest of the world, losing their essential Christian character.

14-16. See Mk. 4.21; Lk. 8.16; 11.33; and also Light from Oriental Life. *The light of the world.* Representatives of the true light, Jn. 8.12.—*A city set on a hill cannot be hid.* They were conspicuous witnesses.—*Even so.* Like the city set on a hill and the lamp put on the stand.—*Before men.* This is very different from "to be seen of men."—*Your good works.* "Not you, but your good works" (*Bengel*).

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

14. *He appointed twelve.* It was no accident, but of deliberate and set purpose that Christ chose twelve. The number is significant and symbolical. "He appointed twelve," says Dr. Chadwick, "in clear allusion to the tribes of a new Israel, a spiritual circumcision, another peculiar people." And by that choice of twelve Christ did two things: he made a stupendous claim for himself. Every Jew knew in a moment what that choice of twelve implied. It implied that Jesus was the promised and long-expected Messiah. It meant that he was the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. It meant that all the glowing visions of a world-wide kingdom of righteousness and peace, given to the world by seer and Psalmist—the seventy-second Psalm, the eleventh of Isaiah, the sixtieth of Isaiah, the sixty-fifth of Isaiah—all those blessed predictions on which the Jews had built all their hopes, had found their realization in Jesus Christ. And this further thing the choice of this number twelve did. It provided the Apostles themselves with a constant "stimulus to devotion and support of faith." The very number twelve would carry their minds back to the promises, to the word of the Lord which standeth sure. It would be to them what the figurative names of their children were to the prophets, what the bones of Joseph were to the enslaved Israelities, a stimulus to their drooping and halting faith. There were rough and troubled days in front of these men, days of gloom and apparently hopeless defeat. Christ gave them this number to remind them that the kingdom the Gospel of which they were sent to preach was that glorious kingdom to the establishment of which God, by the mouth of Psalmist and prophet, had again plighted his holy and inviolable word. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

15. *To have authority to cast out demons.* Evil has no rights. Wherever evil holds a man in its grip or a community in its power it is for those sent by Christ to cry out with authority, "Come out of him." In this we should have neither fear nor weakness. *Bishop William Fraser McDowell, In the School of Christ.*

17. *John the brother of James.* Mark puts James before John, and his list evidently reflects the memory of the original superiority of James as probably the elder. There was a time when John was known as "James' brother." But the time came, as Acts shows, when John took precedence, and was closely linked with Peter as the two leaders. So the ties of kindred may be loosened, and new bonds of fellowship created by similarity of relation to Jesus. In his

kingdom, the elder may fall behind the younger. Rank in it depends on likeness to the king. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

15. *To cast out demons.* In Palestine to-day all diseases are attributed to evil spirits; even when an accident takes place, the people believe that an evil spirit had something to do with it. In going up or down stairs, or entering a dark passage, or walking a rough and rickety road, a person will say, *"Dastoor,"* which means, "Permit me," as some spirit unseen may be lying in waiting for a victim. In all villages and Bedouin camps, as well as in the cities amongst the poor, unsophisticated people, dervishes, who are supposed to have a power over evil spirits, are employed to remove sickness and disease. *Gamahliel Wad-el-Ward,* in *Palestine through the Eyes of a Native.*

Mt. 5.13. *If the salt have lost its savor.* Rock salt is now obtained by the Arabs at Jebel Usdum, or Salt-Mountain at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Sometimes a large proportion of the salt carried away is earthy matter, and when the salt is dissolved this earthy matter remains, insoluble and destitute of the savor of salt.

13. *It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.* A merchant of Sidon, having farmed of the government the revenue from the importation of salt, brought over a great quantity from the marshes of Cyprus—enough, in fact, to supply the whole province for many years. This he had transferred to the mountains, to cheat the government out of some small percentage of duty. Sixty-five houses were rented and filled with salt. Such houses have merely earthen floors, and the salt next the ground was in a few years entirely spoiled. I saw large quantities of it literally thrown into the road to be trodden under foot of men and beasts. It was "good for nothing." *William H. Thompson,* in *The Land and the Book.*

15. *Neither do men light a lamp and put it under the bushel, but on the stand.* Every house was provided with a lamp, a bushel, some skins for wine, a broom, and a mill. It is to be noticed that these various utensils are always named in the Gospel with the definite article—the bushel, the lampstand. There was but one in the house. The lampstand was very tall, and it was usually placed upon the ground. Sometimes then, as now, there was a stone projecting from the wall and the lamp was set on this. It was an oil lamp, with one or more burners. The bushel was an indispensible article in the dwelling of a peasant. It was used as a measure, as its name implies, but it also served many other purposes. Placed on the ground and turned upside down, it took the place of a table, and the lamp was put "on the bushel, not under it." The family, seated around in Eastern fashion, would see the lamp, and so it would "give light to all that were in the house." In the present day the bushel is used as a table, and even as a dish. *Edmond Stapfer,* in *Palestine in the Time of Christ.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Pharisees, as our previous lessons have shown, were becoming daily more threatening in their hatred of Jesus, but at the same time the common people were thronging him in ever increasing numbers, hearing him gladly and seeking the benefit of his healing powers. The enmity of the ruling classes increased Jesus' need of sympathy from a circle of friendly followers, and the popular enthusiasm gave opportunities among the people which increased his need of trained helpers. As companions for himself and as messengers to the people he chose from among all his followers a little company of twelve men. This appointment of the twelve marks a turning point in his career. From now on he lavishes upon them the time and thought that he could not give to the multitude, leading them gradually upward to higher levels of life, and training them that they might later carry on his work.

In lesson IX of the First Quarter we had the Call of the First Disciples. Dr. A. B. Bruce, in "The Training of the Twelve," gives so clear a statement of the three stages in the history of the fellowship of the disciples with Jesus that I quote his words. In the first stage they were simply believers in him as the Christ, and his occasional companions at convenient, particularly festive,

occasions. Of this earliest stage in the intercourse of the disciples with their Master we have some memorials in the four first chapters of John's Gospel, which tell how some of them first became acquainted with Jesus, and represent them as accompanying him at a marriage in Cana (John 11.1) at a passover in Jerusalem (John 11.13, 17, 22) on a visit to the scene of the Baptist's ministry (John 3.22) and on the return journey through Samaria from the south to Galilee. (John 4.1-27, 31, 43-45.)

In the second stage, fellowship with Christ assumed the form of an uninterrupted attendance on his person, involving entire, or at least habitual, abandonment of secular occupations. The narrative in Luke 5.1-11 (Lesson IX, First Quarter) brings under our view certain of the disciples entering on this second stage of discipleship. Of the four persons here named we recognize three, Peter, Andrew, and John, as old acquaintances, who have already passed through the first stage of discipleship. One of them, James the brother of John, we meet with for the first time; a fact which suggests the remark that in some cases the first and second stages may have been blended together—professions of faith in Jesus as the Christ being immediately followed by the renunciation of secular callings for the purpose of joining his company. Such cases, however, were probably exceptional and few.

The twelve entered on the last and brightest stage of discipleship when they were chosen by their Master from the mass of his followers, and formed into a select band, to be trained for the great work of the apostleship. This important event probably did not take place till all the members of the apostolic circle had been for some time about the person of Jesus.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus went about doing good in the province of Galilee, and to him came multitudes not only from all parts of Galilee but also from the south—from Jerusalem and other cities of the province of Judea, and even from Idumæa, the territory which lay immediately south of Judea; and from the east from beyond Jordan, the territory east of that river called in Greek Peræa; and from the northwest from as far as the cities of Tyre and Sidon on the coast, in the province of Syria.

"The mountain" where he called his disciples was some hill probably not far from the Lake. Assign paragraphs 88, 80, 92, 93 and 37-41, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

There is so much in this lesson that verses 7-12 may well be omitted in your class. Make a copy of this little rhyme for each of your scholars and give to them a week in advance of the lesson.

"These are the twelve apostles' names:
Peter, Andrew, John and James,
Two pair of brothers who fished by the sea,
Jesus said unto them, 'Follow me;'
James the Less and Jude were called, too,
Philip also, and Bartholomew,
Matthew and Thomas who doubted his word,
Simon, and Judas who sold his Lord."

To-day, call for the rhyme, and frequently also in later lessons. To fix in your pupils' minds the names of the twelve whom Jesus chose as his disciples so that they might be with him and learn from him and then go out and teach others, and also the thought that they and all followers of Jesus are "lights of the world," is your opportunity to-day. Show Tissot's picture No. 30. Explain about the lamp and the bushel, page 164. The quotation from "Little Ten-Minutes," page 169, is for you. Your pupils probably know this little stanza: have it written on your board and repeated:

"Jesus bids us shine, first of all for him;
Well he sees and knows it, if our light is dim;
He looks down from heaven, to see us shine—
You in your small corner, and I in mine."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. This will be a good time for a review of the divisions of Palestine. Have the sketch map, page 24, drawn on your blackboard before the lesson period. Ask one pupil to write the names of the divisions in their proper place; then have another pupil locate and name the cities mentioned in earlier lessons; let a third locate and name the cities mentioned in to-day's lesson. As this work is being done on the board, have the rest of the class do the same on an outline map in *In the Master's Country,* page 33.

For Older Pupils. Begin with the Historical Background.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Reasons for the Appointment

That they might be with him for his Sake. A good man once said, in speaking about the base treatment given to God by an unfeeling world, "I feel such a pity for God." That seems a strange thought, but change the word "God" to "Christ," and it is a thought that must come to everyone who reads about the base treatment given to his Son. There were special times, as in Gethsemane, when we are allowed a glimpse of Jesus' need of his disciples' presence. In all the record of his life, there is nothing more touching than this evident desire for human sympathy.

That they might be with him for their Sake. The student enters the school of Christ for three supreme things: to hear what Jesus says, or to master his teachings; to see what Jesus does, or to become familiar with his program; to learn what Jesus is, or to become acquainted with his personality. This is the threefold task of the student.

That he might send them forth to preach. Our Golden Text gives Christ's words: Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye go and bear fruit. Having learned the threefold task of the student in the school of Christ, their knowledge must bear fruit in their threefold mission (Bishop McDowell's words in "In the School of Christ"): to proclaim and interpret the Master's teaching to the world; to continue and fulfill the Master's purpose in the world; to reveal the Master's character to the world. The door into the School of Christ is so placed as to command a clear view of the door out. The matriculant has the graduate in view. Entering relates to departing. Companying with him bears on being sent forth to cast out demons and fill the world with truth. The noble gateway to Cornell University contains this inscription which every student reads: "So enter that daily thou mayest become more thoughtful and more learned. So depart that daily thou mayest be more useful to thy country and to mankind."

The training of the twelve was a part of the plan for the saving of the world. The Master gave them the "lion's share" of his attention, but not for their sakes. He gave them more than half of his teaching, the best of his energy, and the most of his time. But he knew what he was doing. These were not more important than the others, any more than we are. They were only important for the others. He would have been glad to have better men. He would still be glad. But he was glad to have such as they were and is glad to have such as we are. They were not a glorious company when they came to him. They were not much more than an average group, in spite of the two or three conspicuous ones, but "He breathed on them and made them illustrous:" or, as Whittier says:

> "They touched his garment's fold, and soon,
> The Heavenly Alchemist transformed their very dust to gold."

They went with him, they stayed with him, they learned of him. Long afterwards "men took knowledge of them that they had been with him."

All Disciples should be Apostles. The noblest motive for answering the call of Christ is not for the salvation of yourself or for the satisfaction of your tastes. It is that you may take your place in the great army of God and go forward, having something to do with the work he is doing in the world. You remember the days of the war, and how ashamed of himself a man felt who never touched with his finger the great struggle in which the nation was

engaged. O, to go through life and never touch the vast work that Christ is doing! It is the sincere and deep conviction of my soul, when I declare that if the Christian faith does not culminate and complete itself in the effort to make Christ known to all the world, that faith appears to me a thoroughly unreal and insignificant thing, destitute of power for the single life and incapable of being convincingly proved to be true. *Phillips Brooks' Sermons.*

II The Appointed

The Glorious Company of the Apostles. The place of Leadership and Primacy belongs to *Simon Peter.* But the primacy he exercised was not the primacy of office, but the primacy of character. Gather any twelve men together, and before they have been in company a week the man of strongest character amongst them—though he be unadorned by any trappings of office, and bear no title of rank or dignity—will inevitably assert himself as leader, and exercise supremacy over the rest. Now Simon Peter was by nature a strong, masterful man. He had a certain force and energy of character that fitted him, and inevitably made him a leader of men. Had we but Peter's early history written out for us, I am persuaded we should find that he had been a leader amongst the fishermen of the Lake and a leader amongst the townsmen of Bethsaida before he became the prince and leader of the twelve. Indeed, Peter was the kind of man who would be prominent anywhere, and the very same qualities that made him prominent in the town of Bethsaida and the fishing circles of Galilee speedily put him in the first place in this glorious company of the Apostles.

The total record of *James* in the New Testament does not extend to more than some half-dozen sentences—and yet so illuminating are those sentences that in them James' character stands fully revealed. "And them, Jesus surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of Thunder." And in that single sentence you have the key to James' character. Yes, if we had nothing but that name Boanerges we should feel we knew James through and through. And what does "Son of Thunder" mean? It means a man of stormy and tempestuous zeal. Zeal was James' chief and salient characteristic. He was the most earnest and fiery spirit in the Apostolic company. There were others of the twelve who had become conspicuous for other and different qualities. Peter was known for his ready speech; John was known for his mystical contemplativeness; Philip was known for his practical commonsense; Andrew was known for his missionary activity; Thomas was known for his philosophical mind. But for zeal, flaming, enthusiastic, almost irrepressible zeal, there was none to compare with James, Zebedee's eldest son; and that flaming, enthusiastic zeal of his carried him to the second place among the Apostles.

John was a man of quiet, contemplative, mystical spirit. He was not the equal of Peter or his own brother James in practical energy and gifts of leadership, the consequence being that, as compared with them, he occupied a subordinate position among the twelve. And yet, if I had my choice to-day, I would rather be John than either James or Peter. Yes, I covet John's place more than I do Peter's primacy or James' exalted throne. Peter and James were first among the twelve, but John was first in the affections of his Lord! Peter and James occupied the chief places in the Apostolic College, but John occupied the chief place in the heart of Christ.

You will find *Andrew's* name always mentioned in the first group, along with Peter and James and John. And yet, when you come to examine the Gospel history you discover that he was certainly not on an equality with the great three. He was not admitted into the intimacy of Christ as they were; he was not made a witness of the great experiences of Christ as were they. He obviously ranks higher than the remaining Apostles, and yet he is not quite the peer of Peter and James and John. Andrew was "betwixt and between." He was above the second, and not quite in the first rank. It would have been an intolerable place for James and John. With their keen and absorbing desire to be first they would have turned sick with envy had they occupied Andrew's position. But it is to Andrew's everlasting credit and honour that, in this most trying place, he preserved the sweetness and serenity of his temper. He was content to be passed over; he was content to fill a subordinate place.

Now, *Philip* was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. It was Philip's good fortune to live in the same town and to count among his friends those two eminent men, Andrew and Peter. What manner of man was this Philip, who so happily found Christ and then was found by him? Scripture does not tell us very much about him—indeed, only mentions him three times outside of the first chapter of John, and in these references we know that he was a man of an inquiring mind. In the incident of the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus turned to Philip with the question, "Whence are we to buy bread that these may eat?" Jesus knew his disciple; he knew that inquiring mind, he knew that Philip would have been making his computations. It was for his inquiring and candid mind, probably, that the Greeks chose him out of all the apostles as the one to whom they would make their request to see Jesus. His own inquiring spirit would naturally put him in sympathy with these inquiring Greeks. And the same temper comes out in that memorable request of Philip made in the Upper Room on the night that Jesus was betrayed, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." He was the man intent upon proving and testing every thing.

Under the name of Nathanael, *Bartholomew* is mentioned twice in John's Gospel. In the first chapter we have the account of his call, and in the last he is introduced as witnessing one of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ. He was a man of prayer, a man of preconceived opinions, a man without guile.

One day Jesus presented himself at the toll-booth of *Matthew,* and said to him in a tone of regal command, "Follow me." It was the call Matthew had longed to hear, and he rendered it instant obedience. "He arose and followed him," and thus it came to pass that Jesus had a publican among the chosen twelve. "When Matthew rose up and left all and followed our Lord," says Dr. Alexander Whyte, "the only thing he took with him out of the old occupation was his pen and ink." He wrote for us the glorious Gospel that bears his name. He himself disappears from the history after the record of his great feast. But by the Gospel he wrote he still continues to comfort and gladden the souls of men.

Thomas sat for his portrait to the dreamer of Bedford, and the result is that in the character of Mr. Fearing we have the melancholy Apostle's picture drawn to the very life. You perhaps remember Great Heart's description of Mr. Fearing. "He was a man of choice spirit," said that valiant champion in his conversation with that notable pilgrim Old Honest, "only he was always kept very low ,and that made his life so burdensome to himself and so troublesome to others." The first string that the musician usually touches is the Base, when he intends to put all in tune. Only here was the imperfection of Mr. Fearing, he could play upon no other musick, but this, till towards his latter end." Yes, without doubt that is Thomas to the very life. As John Bunyan says, in his own quaint way, "He was one of those that played upon the Base; if there was a doleful, dismal, sombre note to be struck you could depend upon Thomas to strike it.

About *James the Son of Alphæus* and *Thaddæus* (called also Judas the Son of James) we know absolutely nothing but their names, and the fact that Jude, in the Upper Room, asked Christ this question: "Lord, what is come to pass, that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" These two Apostles are mere names to use. Of their character, their achievements, their personal history, we know nothing. The occurrence of these two names in the Apostolic lists, without a single deed attached to either of them, reminds us of the great and almost tragic commonplace of life, that much faithful, patient, humble service goes unrecorded and unnoticed of men.

The epithet "Cananæan" applied to the lesser known *Simon,* is derived from a Hebrew word which means "to be ardent or zealous." It is, indeed, the exact Hebrew equivalent of that word ζηλωτής which we find in Luke's account, and the English word "zealot" fairly represents its meaning. All that we know, therefore, of this Simon is summed up in the one word "Zealot."

I believe when *Judas* became a disciple he was sincere in his discipleship; I believe he was honest in his desire to serve and follow Christ. The mischief with Judas was not that he was not sincere, but that he was not whole-hearted in his devotion. Judas did not leave *All* to follow Christ. Like Matthew the

publican, Judas, away at Kerioth, was ready to do almost anything for money. And when he entered the service of Jesus Christ, Judas brought this love of money with him. He was what the Apostle James, in a fine phrase, calls a "double-minded man." He had a divided heart. He had a twofold love. He tried to do the impossible—at once to serve mammon and God. Others who refuse to apologize for Judas feel the necessity of discovering some other motive for the crime than that of mere greed of those thirty pieces of silver. And so Dr. Fairbairn attributes the deed to Judas' resentment at Christ's failure to establish a Messianic kingdom of temporal power, and Dr. Bruce attributes it to the hatred which took possession of Judas' heart when he realized that Jesus read him through and through, and saw his hypocrisy and wickedness. And others, again, say that Judas betrayed Christ in order to save himself—that he saw disaster impending, and so turned, as we should say, "King's evidence." All these motives may perhaps have played their part. Condensed from *The Glorious Company of the Apostles,* by *J. D. Jones.*

III The Result of the Appointment

Ye are the Salt of the Earth. Salt is the stuff that makes things taste bad if it is left out, is the boy's well-known definition. You are fonder of sugar, no doubt, than of salt, but if you had to get along without one of them you could better spare the sugar. Almost all cooked food that we eat is flavored with salt. When Jesus told his disciples, in the words of that "Sermon on the Mount" which were probably uttered soon after they were appointed, that they were the salt of the earth, he gave them high praise. It was for this purpose that he had chosen them, that like salt, they might prove a purifying, sweetening, and preserving power for all mankind.

And this was the result of their appointment and close companionship with Jesus. It is the result of the life of true Christians everywhere. The Epistle to Diognetus, written in the second century, has this thought: What the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world...The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet preserves that very body; and Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they are the preservers of the world.

Ye are the Light of the World. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." He bids us all to shine! What a fine thing to help God light up the world, making it bright and fair, and showing people where to walk!

I have in my hand a bit of wick, just like that which you see in lamps. I hear it say, "Now, I am a wick and I ought to shine! I will!" So it lights up and begins. (Light the wick with a match.) See it shine! But it isn't a very bright light, is it? It sputters and flickers. And—dear me!—it is almost burned out, already. There! I had to drop it lest it should burn my fingers. A pretty poor light, wasn't it?

That is just the way with people, often: they light up and try to shine. They try to be good and to do right, and so to lighten the world. But they find out that their light is so poor! After a while it actually burns out, and they are so ashamed! They wish they had never begun. And they say they will never try again.

But here I have another wick, in the lamp. Now I have lighted it. It shines with a clear, steady light. We will watch it a moment. Ah! it isn't going out, is it? Why, it was burning all last evening and it didn't go out! And it would light our room every evening for a month and wouldn't burn out. So we see it is possible for a tiny wick to give light without being consumed, for this wick is just like the other.

There must be some secret here. Why is it that of two wicks just alike, one should sputter and go out in a minute when it tries to shine, while the other shines brightly night after night?

Oh!—we didn't notice, did we, that this second wick is in the oil all the while. When it begins to feel the flame it just calls for oil: and the oil in the lamp begins to run up into the wick. And it keeps up a steady flow all the time,

feeding the flame. It is the oil that burns, not the wick. The wick simply stays in the oil and the oil fills the wick.

Here is another way, then, of giving light. It isn't enough to light up: we shall soon burn out if that is all. We must keep the wick in the oil. Then the oil will always fill the wick, and our light will burn brightly and steadily. We shall not "go out."

Jesus is the oil in the wick. He said, "Without me ye can do nothing." And he also said, "If ye abide in me, ye shall bear much fruit." Paul said, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." And so can we. But we can do nothing alone. *Frank T. Bayley,* in *Little Ten Minutes.*

God's Purpose of Illumination. What are you a Christian for? That you may go to Heaven? Certainly. That your sins may be forgiven? No doubt. But is that the only end? Are you such a very great being as that your happiness and well-being can legitimately be the ultimate purpose of God's dealings with you? By no means. 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts in order that' we might impart the light to others. Or, as Shakespeare has it, in words perhaps suggested by the Scripture metaphor,

> Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
> Not light them for themselves.

He gave you his Son that you may give the gospel to others. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of Mark.*

Even so let your Light shine. All disciples of Christ show by their behavior that they are his disciples, letting their lesser lights shine so that others will be led through them to the Light of the World. In England in early times lighted lanterns were hung in some of the church steeples at night, and others in front of dwelling houses. The watchman going his rounds called out, "Hang out your lights!" and this is the call of Christ, Let your lights shine, let the world know by your actions and words that you are my follower. An unlighted lantern hung out in those days of old was as effective in guiding a traveler along the road as is many a one in these days who has taken the name of Christian and yet is unlighted. A follower of Christ who is not making his presence felt for good is a failure.

A Chinese student in the University of Peking, who was studying English under Professor King, purchased a copy of the New Testament with the English and Chinese printed in parallel columns. "I want to study the Book," he explained, "because Professor King is so different from the Chinese teachers. He seems to love his pupils. He sympathizes with them, never becomes impatient when they are stupid, and his conduct and language show that he possesses something that I never knew a Chinese teacher to possess, and I do not know where he gets it unless from the Bible." Professor King's light was shining, and it was leading others to the Light of the World.

SENTENCE SERMONS

The disciples became the glorious company of the apostles by being in glorious company. *Dr. W. F. McDowell.*

Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 1 Cor. 1.26.

As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. Jn. 17.18.

If we are going to let our lights shine simply to illumine our own faces we might as well let them go out. *A. J. Gordon.*

Lighthouses don't ring bells and fire cannon to call attention to their shining; they just shine on. *D. L. Moody.*

Such light as you have is a gift of God, set in the firmament of some heaven to shine as brightly as it may: it is no disgrace to the star that it does not shine as the noonday sun. *John Edgar McFayden.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

"Happy we if our history can be summed up in 'he called them unto him and they came.'"

"I know that a great cause of the night is lack of sun," remarked a great philosopher. We know that a great cause of the darkness of many is their lack of the sun of righteousness.

We are the salt of the earth if we have within us the Christ spirit.

What are you a Christian for?

Paul, Luther, Phillips Brooks,—these were great lights of the world, cities set on hills. We can not be like them, but that is no reason why our little lights should not burn brightly in their measure. As Mr. Moody was wont to say, If we can't be a lighthouse, let us be a tallow candle. Tallow candles are meant for the home. Are these our lights shining in our homes?

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

When Jesus withdrew to the Sea of Galilee he was followed by so great a crowd that he bade his disciples have a boat in readiness for him. The people came not only from all parts of Galilee but from Jerusalem and Idumæa. on the south, from the district east of the Jordan, and from Tyre and Sidon on the northwest. They had heard of his many cures, and many tried to touch him that they might be healed; while those tormented with evil spirits fell down before him crying, Thou art the Son of God, and he repeatedly charged them not to make him known.

He made his way up a mountain side and called those whom he would to follow him, and from among the number he chose twelve to be with him constantly, that he might send them forth to preach, with power also to cast out demons. These are the names of the twelve: Peter (the name he gave to Simon), James and John (whom he called Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder), and Andrew; Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas; James the Son of Alphæus, Thaddæus, Simon the Cananæan, and Judas Iscariot, the one who finally betrayed him.

Later Jesus told his disciples that they were the salt of the earth. But, he questioned by way of warning, if the salt loses its savor, how shall its saltness be regained? It is hereafter good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world, he further said. A city built upon a hill cannot be hidden. Men do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel, but upon the stand, where it gives light to all in the house. In like manner you must let your light shine before men, that, seeing your good deeds, they may praise your Father who is in heaven.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Healing in Christ's time and in ours.
2. Evangelists of to-day.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Where is the Sermon on the Mount given in Matthew? 2. Read the entire Sermon. 3. Where is it found in Luke? 4. What part of Luke's account is not found in Matthew? 5. How many Beatitudes are there? 6. Why do we call these verses the Beatitudes? 7. Which one ends in the same way as the first one? 8. What relation does the one you may, perhaps, call the 9th bear to the 1st? 9. How much of the Synoptic Gospels are alike? (Clipping, p. 26.) 10. How may their differences be accounted for? (Clipping, p. 26.)

Questions to think about. 1. Name the twelve disciples. 2. What causes happiness? 3. What makes you happy? 4. What does the word *blessed* mean? 5. What is the distinction between *happiness* and *blessedness?* 6. Can every one be happy? 7. Can every one be blessed? 8. Who are the poor in spirit? (Clipping, p. 176.) 9. When did the prophet Isaiah show himself a man poor in spirit, as we saw in one of our lessons last year? 10. When was Peter poor in spirit? 11. What does the word *meek* mean? 12. Give an illustration of meekness. 13. What is the difference between meekness and weakness? 14. Who are the pure in heart? (Clipping, p. 177.) 15. Give an illustration. 16. What does the word *persecuted* mean?

Note Book and Memory Work. Commit the entire lesson for next week to memory. See suggestions to Teachers, page 17, Introduction.

LESSON IV—APRIL 28

THE BEATITUDES

Golden Text

Blessed are the pure in heart:
for they shall see God. Mt. 5.8

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 5.1-12. The Beatitudes. **T.** Ps. 1. Blessedness of the Righteous. **W.** Isa. 57.15-20. Tenderness toward the lowly. **T.** 2 Cor. 7.5-16. Blessedness of True Penitence. **F.** 1 Pet. 3.8-17. The Christ-like Spirit. **S.** 1 Pet. 4.12-19. Steadfastness and Hope. **S.** 2 Cor. 6.1-10. Courage and Patience. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 5.1-12 READ Luke 6.20-26 COMMIT vv 2-6

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain; and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him: 2 and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,
3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
5 Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.
6 Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.
10 Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye when *men* shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *The mountain.* See page 174.—*Sat down.* Jewish rabbis usually sat while teaching.—*His disciples.* The twelve and also other followers.—*He opened his mouth and taught them.* A Hebraism: a solemn way of introducing words of great importance.

3. *Blessed.* From *Beati,* blessed, the words with which these verses begin in the Latin version, comes our term *Beatitudes.* Blessedness is higher than happiness. Happiness depends upon circumstances: blessedness depend upon relationship to God. Blessedness, says Prof. Stalker, is a happiness pure and spiritual, reaching down to the profoundest elements of human nature and reaching forth to the illimitable developments of eternity.—*The poor in spirit.* This virtue is the opposite of self-conceit. The poor in spirit are not poor-spirited, but they are humble-minded, conscious of their need of God.—*For.* This explains why they are blessed.—*There is the kingdom of heaven.* They are subjects of that spiritual kingdom which begins here in this life. Contrast with this the rabbinical parallel cited in "One Volume Commentary": "Ever be more and more lowly in spirit, since the expectancy of men is to become the food of worms!"

4. *Blessed are they that mourn.* Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that have been exercised thereby, Heb. 12.11.—*For they shall be comforted.* "The word implies *strengthening* as well as *consolation.* The faculty which is exercised by the true mourner is strengthened by use. Those who bear their sorrows patiently grow in patience; those who

sorrow for others grow in sympathy; those who sorrow for their own sin deepen their penitence; those who intercede for the sins of the world grow in the likeness of the great Sin-bearer and Intercessor. The comfort comes from the exercise of the spiritual faculty, and from the consciousness of growing more like God; but there is also that final comfort in the world to come, when 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Rev. 7.17'" (*Dummelow*).

5. *Blessed are the meek.* The mild men (*Wycliffe*). The meek are they who have gained self-control under provocation.—*For they shall inherit the earth.* Quoted from Ps. 37.11.

6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.* A metaphor meaning they that eagerly desire righteousness.—*For they shall be filled.* With righteousness.

7. *Blessed are the merciful.* The compassionate. "To be merciful is to be full of mercy to all that God has made" (*Boardman*).

8. *Blessed are the pure in heart.* Those whom every kind of goodness attracts, who are themselves true. Compare Ps. 24.4. "Purity stands for perfect rightness of character, for life lived by the impulse of unsullied motives, and crowned with the service of unstained deeds. It is not *a* virtue; it is *all* the virtues" (*Ainsworth*).—*For they shall see God.* "For as the mirror, if it be pure, then receives reflections, so the pure soul receives the vision of God." (*Theophylact*).

9. *Blessed are the peacemakers.* Not merely *peaceable men,* as Wycliffe translates, but rather *maintainers of peace,* as in Tyndale's version.—*They shall be called sons of God.* See Rom. 8.14.

10. *Persecuted for righteousness' sake.* "The cause, not the pain, makes the martyr" (*Augustine*).—*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* "They do not possess the kingdom because they suffer and endure; they suffer and endure because they possess the kingdom" (*Ainsworth*).

11-12. These verses repeat and apply to the disciples the general statement of verse 10.—*Great is your reward in heaven.* The blessedness belongs to the life that is to come as well as to the life that now is.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *Seeing the multitudes.* Do not let these words slip through your minds as if they meant very little. If you do not understand them, you cannot hope to understand what follows them. Perhaps you are saying to yourself, anybody can follow that far. You have seen the multitudes. Every man has seen a crowd. Yes, but how has he seen it? As a census-taker might see it? As the man of figures might see it? That is not seeing.

When Jesus looked upon the multitudes he saw life with all its hope and sorrow and evil and sin. He read the story of human need and human destiny. He heard the unuttered crying of the men and women for whom he had come into the world to live and to suffer, and looking into the sad eyes of humanity, feeling its tired hands reaching out after some unknown good, the great saying that God the Father had sent him to say broke from his heart. *Percy C. Ainsworth,* in *The Heart of Happiness.*

6. *They that hunger after righteousness.* Hunger is a recurring manifestation of physical health. The invalid loses desire for food, but with returning health commences to desire and enjoy it. So it is also in the moral and spiritual realm. Hunger for the highest, for the best and truest life, is itself a sign of saving relationship with God. The man who has no hunger and is conscious of no needs has neither knowledge of himself nor of God. *J. Stuart Holden,* in *The Preeminent Lord.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Following the appointment of the twelve comes Jesus' "Ordination Address" to them, to which Augustine was the first to give the title of "Sermon on the Mount," a title which came into general use by the time of the Reformation. A better one has been suggested in recent years, that of "the Gospel of the Kingdom," for it treats first of the characteristics of members of the Kingdom

(Beatitudes); second, of the influence of members on the world; third, it gives an interpretation of the Law; fourth, declares the works of righteousness; fifth, the need of singleness of service; sixth, a prophecy of the Church in the world; and seventh, a test of true discipleship.

It is Luke's order that we follow. Matthew seems to place the Sermon earlier, but he gives no definite order of time. That Luke (6.20-49) and Matthew (chapters 5-7) are recording the same discourse is denied by some scholars. All that Luke gives is found in Matthew's "Sermon" save "The four woes." Scattered through Luke's Gospel are thirty-four other verses which correspond to words given by Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount. It is natural to suppose that Jesus spoke the same thoughts more than once, yet he may have spoken at one time all that Matthew gives in these chapters, or Matthew may have grouped together into one discourse words that were uttered on different occasions.

While the multitudes were near by, the words were spoken directly to the disciples, for Luke says: And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said. The Master Teacher was now beginning his definite training of his chosen pupils, and his first words are naturally an explanation of the nature of membership in the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom which he came to establish.

"The mountain" where the words were spoken may have been Mount Tabor, or any of the hills near the lake. Tradition says it was Kurn Hattin, or the Horns of Hattin, about five miles west of the lake, which has therefore received the name of "The Mount of Beatitudes." The crowd seem to have spent the previous night at the foot of the hill, but Jesus went on higher, and alone spent the night in communion with his Father.

"We have but to feel ourselves back into the bright air and sunshine of that fresh morning far away in Galilee," says Bishop Phillips Brooks, "with the sweet distraction of the early birds filling the air, and the soft, dreamy faces of the Galilean peasants making the listening group, in order to become aware how perfectly impossible it was that the discourse should move to any such measure as might have become the lecture-room of a new Rabbi. It has no rhetorical order or progress. It does not move in any argumentative development. It has its unity in its controlling purpose. It is one by the life blood of the one idea which beats through it, and which those ready and responsive peasant natures feel. And what is that idea? Neander calls the Sermon "The Magna Charta of the Kingdom of God." It is a fine phrase, and in one sense it is completely true. But really the idea of God which fills the great discourse is not the idea of King but the idea of Father."

Assign paragraphs 51, 10-13 and 42-44 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

If you can plant in the mind of young pupils the one thought that their happiness does not depend upon what they *have* or what they *do,* but upon what they *are,* you will have done much toward making their whole after lives happy. After a talk about things which make them happy some of the time, tell a story of one who had none of these things and yet was happy all the time. Then recall Lesson VI of the First Quarter and describe the happy life of the boy Jesus, which was happy not because of what he had but because of what he was. Explain the Beatitudes thus: 1. Happy are those who know that they need to learn how to live aright; 2. Who are sorry for wrong-doing; 3. Who are not proud nor harsh; 4. Who eagerly wish and try to do right; 5. Who help others, even animals, that are suffering; 6. Whose thoughts and words and deeds are true; 7. Who help others to be peaceable and friendly; 8. Who do right even if they must suffer for it. Omit the last two verses of the lesson. Make certain that your pupils all know the Beatitudes in the exact words and by number. Next week call for them again, and for their meaning in the simple words you have given this week. Show Tissot's picture No. 45, "The Sermon on the Mount."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Some people, it is said, go wandering around hoping that happiness will run against them at some street corner and say: "Here

I am; Happiness, you know!" and they wouldn't know Happiness if they should meet her and stare in her face! What do you think is happiness? What is one thing that would make you happy? Do you know some one who has, as we say, everything to make him happy? Is he happy? Do you know some one who has very little to make him happy, and yet who is happy? How can that be? Then, having things does not always make one happy, and not having them does not make one unhappy? And when having something makes you happy, does the happiness last always? You tire of the bicycle or the book you wanted so much, and you think of something which you have not and imagine that would make you happy, don't you? Happiness that lasts does not depend on having things. Jesus tells his disciples about happiness that lasts, and on what it depended. He speaks of blessedness rather than happiness, however, for blessed means much more than happy. Something that happens can make us happy for a time, but it is being something that makes us blessed for all time. What kind of people does Jesus first declare blessed?

For Older Pupils. We are to have seven consecutive lessons from the Sermon on the Mount, a golden opportunity to become familiar with this great discourse, to learn the subjects which the great Preacher thought of most importance for right living, and his method of dealing with them. And is it not marvelous that his words, spoken to Jewish peasants nineteen hundred years ago in Galilee, who were living lives so utterly different from these that we are living, are just as applicable to us as to them? "Why do you talk of Jesus as a Jew?" once asked an old Welshwoman; "he always speaks to me in Welsh." And he always speaks to us in English, and speaks with all the telling force and authority of One who is alive to all our varied interests and perplexities. "The teachings of Jesus fit like the light or the atmosphere into all the changed conditions. For life has remained unchanged. And we feel that in New York and Chicago as in Capernaum and Jerusalem his teachings still show the right relation between men and institutions, between rules and life, between character and property, between worship and obedience. And all this because the specific rules were so few and the general principles so many; and because he was fundamentally teaching men how to live."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Gospel of Blessedness

A Goal that all are seeking. If there is one thing that all the world has always wanted and always will want it is happiness. "What is the highest of all realisable goods?" asks Aristotle. "As to its name, I suppose, nearly all men are agreed," he continued, "for the masses and the men of culture alike declare that it is happiness." The search for happiness is universal. And how great a company are seeking it where it may not be found! The Rev. Percy C. Ainsworth, in "The Heart of Happiness," thus describes the search as depicted on canvas, one of the most tragic pictures, he says, that he ever saw. There was the last rough slope of a mountain leading to the edge of a precipice, at the foot of which one caught a glimpse of a graveyard. The slope was packed with a dense crowd of men and women, some in evening dress, some in a garb of toil, some in rags, all struggling to gain a foothold on the highest point, all of them tearing at and treading upon one another, all of them gazing upward, where the filmy, beckoning, mocking figure of pleasure floated out of reach. The picture was called, "The Pursuit of Pleasure," and in that grim, ghastly, sunless canvas the artist had not painted one happy face. Not a smile, not a flicker of gladness; nothing but fear, hatred, selfishness, and pain.

The Goal that all should seek. There is a greater felicity than that of happiness. The truly happy may have this greater bliss of blessedness. For those whom the world counts unfortunate are unhappy in a sense, for there is no denying that the possession of good things—health, wealth, friends—may and should bring their possessor happiness. But they more often than not fail in doing this. Goethe had all three, yet at the age of fourscore he declared that he had not had more than four days of real happiness in all his long life. The higher bliss of blessedness no things, however good, no possessions, how-

ever desirable, can bring. It is only being and doing that make one blessed. There is in man a higher than love of happiness, in the words of Carlyle; he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness. The poet Burns was not blessed and he knew the reason.

It's no' in titles nor in rank,
It's no' in wealth like Lon'on bank,
  To purchase peace and rest.
If happiness hae not her seat
  And center in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
  But never can be blest.

II RECEIPTS FOR BLESSEDNESS

Blessed are the Poor in Spirit. "Fancy," says Carlyle, "that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot; fancy thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp." By this extravagant language Carlyle proclaims his belief that if we were so poor in spirit as to think we do not deserve any kind of happiness, then we should be content with whatever crumbs of happiness may fall to our lot. That is not the teaching of the first Beatitude. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven is the triumphant proclamation; not crumbs of happiness, but all the riches of blessedness are his who appreciates his own unworthiness, who like John the Baptist feels that in comparison with Jesus he is so poor spiritually as to be unworthy of fulfilling the part of a slave and unloosening his sandal thong. They are happy, or much more, blessed, because they possess the kingdom of heaven.

The poor in spirit are not the poor-spirited. Was Isaiah poor-spirited? Far from it. Yet when in the year that King Uzziah died, as one of our lessons last year told us, Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple; and when he heard one of the Seraphim call to the other saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory," he was so poor in spirit that he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "All men are spiritually poor; but all are not poor in spirit." All men are ignorant; but there are two kinds of ignorance. One kind says: "I am wise, I am instructed, I do not need to learn anything." That kind of ignorance remains dark and unblessed to the end. But the other ignorance confesses to its own darkness, and with that very confession, the first ray of light comes. Blessed are the ignorant who know that they are ignorant, for theirs is the Kingdom of Knowledge." Blessed are the spiritually poor who know that they are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of spirituality.

Blessed are they that mourn. This sounds, as Professor Stalker suggests, very much like "Happy are the unhappy." We must not stop with these words, but add the reward, which brings with it the reason for the blessedness—for they shall be comforted. The mourners are blessed for they are comforted. Mournings are but one's wayside campings, to paraphrase a saying of Robert Louis Stevenson's, one's soul is in the journey; and the journey is made blessed by the way in which one's sufferings at the wayside are comforted. Not every one that sorrows because of loss of health or of money or for whatsoever cause is sure of comfort—this is not the teaching of the Beatitude: the poor in spirit who mourns in the sense of being penitent for sin, is sure of comfort, and one who by reason of any suffering is led to welcome the Comforter has the blessedness of reward.

Blessed are the Meek. The Jews were looking forward to inheriting the earth in a literal sense; when the Messiah came they expected that their land would rule all lands. How strange it must have sounded to them to hear such a reward promised to a passive virtue, not to an active deed! But the inheritance here spoken of is rather spiritual than material. "Who owns the mountains?" questions Dr. F. J. McConnell. "The man who has a deed to the land? Rather the man who appreciates the mountains. The saints own the

earth in that they see the spiritual significance of life and are masters of life." And the virtue of meekness is far from being a passive one. Only a strong person can be a truly meek one. The Greek word here used is the same one that in Xenophon's Anabasis is used for the taming of wild horses. A meek man is a tamed man, one who has himself in perfect control under all and every provocation. A meek man is not one who lacks force and fire and power. but one who controls these good qualities and uses them for right things.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness. A little puny child was brought to a London hospital for treatment, and on his arrival the nurse gave him a glass of milk. Before lifting the glass to his lips the little fellow asked anxiously, "How deep may I drink, miss?" How much that question told of the poverty of a home where a glass had to be shared among many! He could hardly believe the nurse when she told him to drink it all. How deep may we drink in our thirst after righteousness? God made us for righteousness: we shall be filled, and therefore we are blessed.

Blessed are the Merciful. For they shall obtain mercy. This Beatitude recalls the later word of Jesus: With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. If you give mercy, you shall receive mercy, from your fellow-men in a measure and from God in abundance.

(For the 6th Beatitude, see Third Topic.)

Blessed are the Peacemakers. A sign has recently appeared in a London window, wherein a Frenchwoman announces herself as an *artiste stoppeur.* She is nothing more nor less than an artist at stopping holes—one who darns and patches in the latest French style. Peacemakers are artists in stopping all things that disturb the peace, whether like Isaac of old who prevented friction by quietly moving on and digging new wells, or like Carnegie of to-day who gives his millions to help forward the movement for international peace.

"Thrice blessed are they who make strife cease,
And all their lives are making peace."

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for Righteousness' sake. Blessed are they who endure to the end, no matter what they have to suffer or sacrifice for righteousness' sake. Will it surprise you to hear that in our own dominions Christians are sometimes persecuted because of their religion? At Tobaco in the Philippines, a Protestant church has recently been established, and word has just come from there that one of the new converts went to a place some distance away, where a priest became infuriated and threatened to kill him because of his "pernicious teaching." "There go the demonios," the people called after the missionary and his wife as they passed on the street, and at night several large stones were flung into the little church, but fortunately no one was hit. "This is as it should be," said one of the new converts at the close of the meeting, "for it is only what Christ foretold his disciples."

III Blessed are the Pure in Heart

Who are the Pure in Heart? The sixth Beatitude has been selected for our Golden Text because it is the most comprehensive Beatitude—it includes all the others. He who is pure in heart is humble, penitent for his sins, gentle, eager for righteousness, compassionate, peace-loving, enduring. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, and thoughts that are pure, sincere, guileless, lead to actions that are upright, true, Christ-like. In the words of Dr. George Dana Boardman, As purity, when affirmed of other things such as water, air, glass, means freedom from mixture; so purity of heart means singleness of moral aim, freedom from all alloys, whether of insincerity, distraction, hate. Not that the pure in heart are absolutely sinless; for none is good save One, even God. But the pure in heart are the simple-thoughted, the clear-purposed, the straightforward, in one word, the guileless.

The Reward of the Pure in Heart. They shall see God. You remember that in our lesson from the Book of Esther last year we noted how inaccessible was an oriental monarch; the approach to his royal presence was carefully guarded, and even the life of one who ventured near him without permission was in danger. So Old Testament heroes thought of God as a great king who dwelt apart surrounded by a bodyguard of angels.

Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

the Psalmist questioned, and then replied:

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.

And Jesus repeats the imagery and says that the pure in heart are blessed for they shall see God, meaning they shall have access to him, shall enjoy communion with him.

"Blest are the pure in heart,
For they shall see our God;
The secret of the Lord is theirs,
Their soul is Christ's abode."

It is only the pure in heart that have the capacity for seeing God. To the hardened sinner, to the indifferent, or to the heedless, God cannot reveal himself, for they cannot grasp divine revelation. The secret of the Lord is only with them that fear him.

The Soul's Plaint.

"I do not see thee, God!" a soul made plaint;
"O for an angel hand to tear the veil apart;
Hide not from me thy face, I strive, I faint!"
The silence whispered, "Art thou pure in heart?" *The Outlook.*

One who saw God. This is the wonderful thing about the pure in heart—they do see God. That was William's distinction. In spite of his own faults and of ethical errors in some of his preaching he outstripped all these and did actually see God; and it made him different from other men who, however wise, do not see God. On this account I have no doubt that he fumbled more souls into the Kingdom of Heaven than some of the most popular tabernacle preachers of modern times. *"A Circuit Rider's Wife."*

A Prayer.

Lord, make me pure:
Only the pure shalt see thee as thou art,
And shalt endure. *Christina Rossetti.*

God wants the Boys. Mr. Robert E. Speer said in an address at Northfield that he carried around in his pocketbook a little card which was one of his choicest possessions. His seven-year-old boy brought it to him one evening, explaining that it had been given to him by a carpenter who was at work upon a barn where he and other boys were playing. The lad read the card:

God wants the boys, God wants the boys,
The little boys, the noisy boys,
The funny boys, the thoughtless boys,
God wants the boys with all their joys,
That he as gold may make them pure
And teach them trials to endure.
His heroes brave he would have them be,
Fighting for truth and purity.
God wants the boys.

And then he turned the card over, which he had signed, and read: Are you willing to be God's boy? If so, sign your name to this covenant and daily ask God to help you keep it: I receive Jesus as my Saviour and will try hard to do what I think he would have me do.

SENTENCE SERMONS

If we covet the reward, we must care for the record.

Happiness depends, as nature shows
Less on exterior things than most suppose. *Cowper.*

It is the demands, not the promises, that make men of us. *P. T. Forsythe.*

By all that he requires of me
I know what God himself must be. *Whittier.*

The world is nearer God in its pains than in its pleasurings; and the path of the aching feet leads to the comfort of God's grace and peace. *Percy C. Ainsworth.*

A child of God should be a visible beatitude for joy and happiness. *Spurgeon.*

Men continually forget that happiness is a condition of mind and not a disposition of circumstances. *Leaky.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

We may and should be happy, whatever things happen to us, or whatever things we fail to possess. The highest happiness lies not in circumstances nor in possessions, but in ourselves.

"Dear child, are you happy?" Björnsen questioned a deaconess. "Yes, professor, I am perfectly happy," she quietly replied, with shining face. "And, professor, may I ask, are you happy?" After a moment's hesitation, he answered: "I wish I could answer 'Yes' as confidently as you did." How would you answer Björsen's question?

"Instead of trying so hard, as some of us do," said James T. Fields, "to be happy, as if that were the sole purpose of life, I would, if I were a boy again, try still harder to deserve happiness."

Pure as the finest gold,
As rock so rigid hard
And clear as crystal, keep
The soul within thy guard. *Angelus Silesius.*

These men of the Beatitudes possess the qualities of heart that Jesus would have every one possess. Such as they are, we may be, and such let us resolve with God's help to be.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The nature of goodness.
2. Why are you not happy? See article with this title in the *Outlook,* Sept., 1906; The Quest of the Bluebird, by Maeterlinck.
3. Carnegie and other peacemakers.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Which of Matthew's Beatitudes are given by Luke and in what order? (1, 4, 2, 8.) 2. In what other Gospel is the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus found? (None.) 3. Look up all Jesus' words in regard to riches. (Subject Index of Bible.) 4. Tell the parable of the Rich Fool. (Lk. 12.) 5. What do we know about the writer of the First Gospel? (Clipping, p. 27.) 6. When and for whom was it written? (Clipping, p. 27.)

Questions to think about. 1. In the woes pronounced does it mean that every one who is rich, who is well-fed, who laughs, is unfortunate? 2. Then in the Beatitudes does it mean that every one who is poor, who is hungry, who weeps, is to be blessed? What is understood? 3. In the parable is the rich man condemned because he is rich or Lazarus commended because he is poor? 4. Why is the rich man condemned? 5. Among which of the men of Matthew's Beatitudes does Lazarus belong? 6. What kind of rich people does Jesus condemn? (Clipping, p. 181.) 7. What do we call the rich man in this parable; why? (Clipping, p. 181.) 8. What is meant by the phrase, "Abraham's bosom"? (Clipping, p. 181.) 9. Come to class prepared to tell about some historical character who was persecuted for righteousness' sake. 10. Come prepared to tell about some one whose riches did not bring happiness.

Note Book Work. See Suggestions to Teachers, p. 17, Introduction.

LESSON V—MAY 5

POVERTY AND RICHES

Golden Text

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Luke 12.15

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 6.20-26; 16.19-31. Poverty and Riches. **T.** Eph. 3.14-21. Riches in Christ. **W.** Amos 6.1-14. The Ungodly Rich. **T.** Matt. 19.16-24. Danger of Riches. **F.** Prov. 30.7-9. An Appropriate Prayer. **S.** Acts 4.32-37. Example of Primitive Love. **S.** 1 Pet. 1.1-9. A Glorious Inheritance. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 6.20-26; 16.19-31 COMMIT vv 20, 21

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *are* ye poor:
for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed *are* ye that hunger now: for
ye shall be filled Blessed *are* ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. 22 Blessed
are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their*
company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of
man's sake. 23 Rejoice in that day, and leap *for joy:* for behold, your reward
is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.
24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. 25
Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe *unto you,* ye
that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. 26 Woe *unto you,* when all
men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the
false prophets.

19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and
fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: 20 and a certain beggar named
Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 and desiring to be fed with the
crumbs that fell from the rich man's table: yea, even the dogs came and licked
his sores. 22 And it came to pass that the beggar died, and that he was
carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died,
and was buried. 23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and
seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said,
Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the
tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this
flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime re-
ceivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now
here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. 26 And besides all this, be-
tween us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from
hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.
27 And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to
my father's house; 28 for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them,
lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 But Abraham saith, They
have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father
Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he
said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be
persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

20. *On his disciples.* "The discourse was spoken to the disciples generally—to the twelve particularly—to the people prospectively" (*Alford*).—*Blessed are ye poor.* If we think of the words as spoken to the disciples generally, Dr. Bruce's explanation is interesting. He says that Jesus was the poor man's

friend, that he would say to the children of want and sorrow, Blessedness is possible even for you; there is a kingdom of God, lift up your thoughts to it, and it shall be well with you. But as Luke introduces the words, they are addressed to the twelve disciples particularly, and Jesus certainly did not mean to have them taken without qualification; every one that is poor, hungry, or sorrowful is not blesed any more than in the woes that follow every one who is rich, satisfied, joyful is accursed. The disciples were poor in the sense that they were ready to learn of him, poor in spirit as Matthew's version has it; they were hungry for righteousness; they knew spiritual sorrow; and it is these characteristics of members of the Kingdom that Jesus calls blessed, just as Matthew's version explicitly states.—*Kingdom of God.* Luke is writing for Gentile readers who are not familiar with the Hebrew phrase *Kingdom of heaven.*

21-22. *That hunger now.* That hunger and thirst after righteousness, Mt. 5.6—*Weep. Mourn,* Matthew.—*Laugh. Be comforted,* Matthew.—*Separate you from their company.* Cast you out of their synagogues, Jn. 16.2; excommunicate you.

24. *You that are rich.* Other words of Jesus, Mt. 10.24 and the parable of Dives and Lazarus, show that he means those that trust in their riches, are lovers of money, do not hold it as a trust for others, but are indifferent to the sufferings of others.—*Ye have received your consolation.* Compare verse 16.25 in this lesson.

25-26. *That are full now.* Faring sumptuously, like Dives.—*Shall hunger.* Be conscious of your lack of spiritual nourishment.—*That laugh now.* "The godless, contemptuous laughter of the wicked is meant. Innocent mirth is approved by Christ, Lk. 15.24."—*Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you.* "Why, what evil have I done?" was the question Diogenes Laertius asked when told that all men were praising him.

19. *A certain rich man.* We call him for convenience *Dives,* the Latin word for "a rich man."—*In purple.* His rich outer garment was dyed in the purple obtained from the shellfish murex.—*Fine linen.* The material of his inner garment. The two words indicate the luxury of Dives.—*Faring sumptuously.* Or, *living in mirth and splendor,* RVm.

20-21. *Lazarus.* A contraction of Eleazar, Helped of God. His name expresses his character. From Lazarus is derived *lazar, leper, lazaretto.*—*Desiring.* His longing for the rich man's crumb ungratified.—*Even the dogs came and licked his sores.* A vivid touch added to the story to show the utter helplessness of Lazarus.

22-31. In this parable Jesus adopts the well-known rabbinical fancies as regards Hades—angel bearers, Abraham's bosom, the two divisions in Hades, the separation and yet communication between them. "He does not thereby stamp these conceptions of the state of the dead with his assent. The purpose of the narrative is not to reveal the secrets of that land, but to impress the truth of retribution for the sin in question" (*Maclaren*).

22. *Abraham's bosom.* "A Jewish name, not of heaven, but of the intermediate state of bliss, in which the souls of the just await the resurrection" (*Dummelow*). The locality is called Hades, next verse.—*The rich man also died.* See Job 21.13.

23. *In Hades.* The word is not Gehenna, hell. "Hades, in which the souls both of just and unjust are detained" (*Hippolytus*).—*In his bosom.* Compare Mt. 8.11. "The entire scenery and phraseology are Jewish, and are borrowed from those which were current among the rabbis of Christ's day. Beyond the awful truth that death brings no necessary forgiveness, and therefore that the retribution must continue beyond the grave, we are not warranted in pressing the details of the imagery which are used as part of the vivid picture. And since the scene is in Hades, we cannot draw from it any safe inferences as to the final conditions of the lost" (*Farrar*).

24-25. *Father Abraham, have mercy on me.* "The rabbis said, 'The fire of Gehenna has no power over the sinners of Israel, for Abraham descends and rescues them from it'" (*Dummelow*).—*Son.* Greek, *child,* RVm.—*He is comforted.* Rewarded, not because he endured "evil things" in this life, but because of his real character.—*Thou art in anguish.* Punished, not because he enjoyed "good things" here, but because of his real character.

26. *Besides all this.* Or, *in all these things,* RVm.—*A great gulf is fixed.* "The rabbis said, God hath set the one against the other. How far are they distant? A hand's breadth. Rabbi Jochanan saith. A wall is between. But the rabbis say, They are so even with one another that you may see out of one into the other: compare Rev. 14.10" (*Dummelow*).

28-31. *That he may testify unto them.* Warn them to repent, verse 30. Does not Dives here seek to justify himself, to imply that he had lacked sufficient warning? We are saved by faithful hearing, not by apparitions (*Bengel*).

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

22. *He was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom.* Dummelow quotes in this connection these sayings of the rabbis: None can enter Paradise but the just, whose souls are carried thither by angels; When an Israelite departs to his eternal home, the angel in charge of the Garden of Eden, who receives every circumcised son of Israel, introduces him into the Garden of Eden. When the just depart from the world three companies of angels go before them in peace.

23. *In Hades.* The ancient Egyptians believed that after death one went down below the surface of the earth where there was a great labyrinth of tunnels and vaults, and here one wandered about, in danger of falling into pits and over precipices, or of meeting terrible monsters. He who found his way up to the light had his sins forgiven. Egyptian priests had a labyrinth constructed which was considered a copy of the one in the dark under-world, an immense underground arrangement of halls and passageways and vaults. People threaded this labyrinth so as to help a friend in his journey through the one in the under-world.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Matthew's gospel has eight Beatitudes; Luke's has only four, and they are followed by four woes upon the corresponding opposite classes of people. The parable of the Rich man and Lazarus was spoken to Pharisees who were covetous, heard all these things and derided him, Lk. 16.14. We study it now for its light upon the first Beatitude.

Assign paragraphs 51, 45-47, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Said Dr. Jowett in a recent address: "I can never stand in the pulpit without certain pictures coming back into my mind that I saw as a child. I have torn them down from my mental imagery, but they come back again. I remember the infant class-room in which I was brought up. In it was a picture of Dives in hell with red flames about him and God looking on. I simply hated God. If the artist had represented God in tears it would have won me, but that repellent face! My judgment has condemned it for years, but there it is—the persistence of first ideas." Neither a repellent God nor a Dives in flames is a fitting subject for children's thoughts. Almost as realistic as a painting on canvas is the word painting in our parable. Because of the very great difficulty of telling it in such a way as not to give a little child false ideas, you will be wise to omit it. There is danger to be avoided as well as blessings to be gained because of the persistence of first ideas.

Do not take up, either, Luke's version of four of the Beatitudes, the first part of our text; it would only confuse your pupils. Call for the Beatitudes as given in Matthew, and review the lesson of last Sunday. Take the Golden Text for to-day which is, in meaning, a repetition of the thought of last week's lesson, and make that the basis of your instruction. Translate it into this: It is not what we have that makes our true life. Tell Laura E. Richard's story. page 184. Tell also about the little boy whose hand was held fast in a vase, which had a slender neck. His father feared he would have to break the vase, which was a very valuable one. "Try once more," said the father; "put your fingers out straight like this, and then pull hard." "But I can't let go," said the boy. "Can't let go of what?" questioned the father. "Why, the penny. If

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LAZARUS

Eugène Burnand

I put my fingers out straight I would drop it." All the while he had been holding a penny tightly in his hand, and of course he couldn't pull his doubled-up fist out through the slender neck of the vase.

Give copies of the stanza on page 191, for next week's lesson.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When Mr. George M. Pullman was asked how it felt to be a millionaire, he replied: "I believe that I am no better off—certainly no happier—than I was when I didn't have a dollar to my name, and had to work from daylight until dark. I had fewer cares; I slept better; and I may add, generally, I believe I was far happier in those days than I have been many times since I became a millionaire."

He had learned our lesson of last Sunday, that lasting happiness does not come from having but from being, the lesson that the first seven verses of our text to-day repeat. (After a few questions on these verses, bringing out the fact that they repeat in different ways four of the Beatitudes as given by Matthew, hasten on to the main theme of this lesson.)

What is the title of to-day's lesson? We are all interested in this subject. Before referring to the text, let us see what good things we can say about riches...Then riches are a good; we are all agreed as to that. Jesus never said anything to the contrary, he only gave many warnings against the wrong use of riches. When some one spoke about "riches taking wings" our Mr. Dooley remarked sagely: "Riches niver took wings from anybody that was entitled to wear wings." And Emerson said that wealth is a responsibility that is only good for those who know how to bear it. What did Jesus say about this?

When you take up the parable of the lesson show your pupils the picture facing page 180, and let them see how vividly the suffering of Lazarus is portrayed by the wasted figure seated on the steps of a grand palace, upon whom the dogs are looking with inquiring sympathy. This picture reproduces one of a series of beautiful parable pictures, wall size, issued by the French publishers, Berger-Levrault et Cie. At the Paris Salon of 1908 the honor of having a special room set aside for his paintings was accorded the artist, M. Eugene Burnand.

For Older Pupils. If you have a thoughtful class, it will be well to discuss Luke's and Matthew's versions of the Beatitudes before taking up the main theme of the lesson.

Will Carleton says that thousands of people have been plunged into real poverty by winning or inheriting a fortune. What does he mean? Piscator, who voices Isaak Walton's philosophy, speaks with pity of "men condemned to be rich." What does he mean? Should you like to fall under such condemnation? We would be willing to run the risk, we say, the risk of riches plunging us into real poverty, as Will Carleton says, the risk of the burden of responsibility, as Isaak Walton means. What is the teaching of Jesus as regards the risk?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I A Man's Life Consisteth Not in the Abundance of the Things Which He Possesseth

The Teaching of Jesus in regard to Riches. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Dives is not condemned because he is rich, but because he did not use his riches to help his brother man in need. Lazarus desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, but the rich man in his selfish ease did not trouble himself about the poor beggar.

There is an old story to the effect that a starving beggar woman came to a prosperous clergyman and begged him to pray with her. Readily he did so. Down on their knees they went and he began, "Our Father." "Stop," said she, "tell me, is he my Father as well as yours?" "Oh, yes," he replied. "Then, we are brother and sister, and I shall wait here for my dinner." Dives' sin was not in being rich but in not using his riches aright.

Throughout all the words of Jesus on the subject of wealth three thoughts are constant: (1) riches are a good but a lesser good, they receive their worth from their use; (2) riches are a great responsibility, a trust for whose use the owner is accountable to God, they must be shared; (3) riches are a great temptation, they tend to make their possessor think himself superior to his fellows, to keep him out of the kingdom of God.

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth: this is the word of Jesus which he utters over and over in various ways. Earthly riches perish, to be rich toward God is the only wealth of real value. Listen to his words: Take heed, and beware of covetousness. The cares and deceitfulness of riches choke the word. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

A Poor Girl who is Rich. "Mamma," said Mabel, "I am *very* glad we are rich!"

Mamma looked up with a little smile; she was patching Freddy's trousers, and had just been wondering whether they would last till spring, and if not, how she was to get him another pair. "Yes, Mabel dear," she said. "We are very rich in some things. What were you thinking about when you spoke?"

"I was thinking how dreadful it would be to be hungry," replied Mabel thoughtfully. "I mean terribly hungry, like people in a shipwreck. Why, just to be a little hungry, the way Freddy and I get sometimes, makes me feel all queer inside; and besides, it makes me cross and horrid. So I wondered how it would feel to be really hungry, and not to be sure that you were going to have good bread and milk for supper; and that made me feel so glad that we were rich."

Mamma was silent for a few minutes. She was thinking of a house to which she took some work the day before. She had passed through the dining-room, and there, at the carved table, sat a little girl with her supper before her—delicate rolls, and cold chicken and raspberry jam, and hot cocoa in a china cup all covered with roses, and creamy milk in a great silver mug.

The child was about Mabel's age, but her face wore a very different expression. She had pushed her chair back, and was crying out that she would not eat cold chicken. She wouldn't, she wouldn't, she *wouldn't!* So there now! The nurse might just as well take it way, and she was a horrid, cross old thing. Mamma was going to have partridge for dinner, and she wanted some of that, and she would have it.

Then, when the nurse shook her white capped head and said, "No, miss! Your Mamma said you were to have the chicken; so now eat it, like a good girl, and you shall have some jam," the child flew at her like a little fury, and slapped and pinched her. That was all that Mabel's Mamma saw, but as she thought of it, and then looked at her little maiden with a sweet face, smiling over her blue pinafore, she smiled again, very tenderly, and said,—

"Yes, dear, it is a very good thing to be rich, if it is the right kind of riches. Go now, darling, and get the bread and milk; set the table, and then call Freddy into supper." *Laura E. Richards,* in *Five Minute Stories.*

A Rich Man who is Poor. "I have made money, but I am poor and sick in spirit, and I know it. Things, people, books, bore me! Even my family—well, the whole truth is, I have lost the capacity for happiness. The only thing my brain responds to is some scheme for making money! And my reason shows me the usefulness, the barrenness of such effort."

A Prayer. We remember with sorrow and compassion the idle rich, who have vigor of body and mind and yet produce no useful thing. Forgive them for loading the burden of their support on the bent shoulders of the working world. Forgive them for wasting in refined excess what would feed the pale children of the poor. Forgive them for setting their splendor before the thirsty hearts of the young, luring them to theft or shame by the lust of eye and flesh. Forgive them for taking pride in their selfish lives and despising those by whose toil they live. Forgive them for appeasing their better self by pretended duties and injurious charities. We beseech thee to awaken them by the

new voice of thy spirit that they may look up into the stern eyes of thy Christ and may be smitten with the blessed pangs of repentance. *Walter Rauschebusch,* in *The American.*

II Extraordinary or Ordinary Ways

The Ordinary is Extraordinary. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead. Many wait for something practically supernatural that will agitate, stimulate, overmaster them; something strange, like the handwriting on the palace wall, the angel in the path of Balaam, the spectre in the dream of Eliphaz, or the vision that smote Saul. But really the pages which record God's law and love are more wonderful than ghostly handwriting; the appeal of conscience is not less the voice of God than the expostulation at the gates of Damascus; and Jesus standing in our path, not with a drawn sword but with an olive branch, ought to move us more deeply than spectres.

Or if men are not waiting for supernatural interventions, they are perhaps trusting to be effectually moved by extraordinary incidents in natural life. A pestilence must walk in darkness, a catastrophe startle, an arousing sermon be listened to, or a mighty revival like a great wave lift the vacillating spirit over the bar it cannot cross with ordinary tides. Now, in all probability these hesitating, procrastinating ones have been as strangely, deeply moved in conscience and heart as they ever will be again. Here the ordinary is extraordinary. If none of these mighty tides of grace bear us into the haven, we may begin to fear that we shall be left shipwrecked, stranded on the sands. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Education of the Heart.*

The Black Chief's Demand. Sekomi, the chief of the Bamangwato tribe of Africa, came to Livingstone's hut one day and said: "I wish you would change my heart. Give me medicine to change it, for it is proud, proud and angry, angry always." "I lifted up the Testament and was about to tell him of the only way in which the heart can be changed," said Livingstone, "but he interrupted me by saying, "Nay, I wish to have it changed by medicine, to drink and have it changed at once, quickly." And in this demand he persisted. There are people nearer home seemingly seeking some such medicine.

Two Ways. The Ethiopian was reading the Word of God when Philip approached and asked if he understood what he was reading. At his request Philip joined him in his chariot and explained its meaning. The Ethiopian listened and in this ordinary way was led to believe the truth; and when they came to some water he questioned: "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Phillip baptized him and he went on his way rejoicing. Saul was going along the road to Damascus, "breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," and it required an extraordinary sight, a vision of the Lord, to convince him of the truth. It matters not how faith comes, remarked Dr. Robertson,—whether through the intellect, as in the case of Thomas, or through the heart, as in the case of John, or as the result of long education, as in the case of Peter. God has many ways of bringing different characters to faith.

III Missionary Topic Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake

A True Story. This true story of what an African lad had to endure for his faith is condensed from Dr. T. L. Pennell's book, "Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier."

Alam Gul was a member of the cricket eleven in a Muhammadan school, whose one great wish was that God would make the way clear for him to become his disciple. He had to stand fire among his school-fellows, but because he was almost the best bat in the cricket team, they did not carry their persecutions very far, and it was more banter and sneers that he had to endure than anything worse. Finally the vacation time came and he went home to tell his people that he was resolved to be a Christian.

At first his family resorted to coaxing, reminded him of his good family and noble ancestors, and of the bright future which lay before so clever and well-educated a boy. His brother was about to be married; even then they were

preparing for the wedding-guests. This would have to be all stopped, for the family of the bride would refuse to give her into a family disgraced, and then his brother would die of shame, and no one would be able to wipe the stain away for ever.

When these tactics failed, the old *Mullah* was called. He was too wroth to argue when he found that 'Alam Gul no longer wore the charm, and abused him with all the epithets that he could think of, and left the house threatening to excommunicate the whole family. Later on he came back in a calmer mood with two older *Mullahs* from a neighboring village, who were much revered for their learning and sanctity, and these surrounded 'Alam Gul, and argued for hours to show him the error of his ways, and the corruption of the Christian Scriptures. Finding their arguments of no avail, they formally cursed him with all the anathemas of the *Quran,* both for this life and the next.

The next trial was to be the most heart-searching and trying of all. It was when he went into the *Zenana.* His mother was there with other women, and as soon as they saw him they began weeping and loudly lamenting. His mother came with her hair dishevelled, and falling down before him, beat her breast, and bewailed with loud cries and frantic gesticulations that she had borne a son who was going to disgrace the family and bring down her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. The women were still weeping, and 'Alam Gul persuading, when his father came in, and, seizing 'Alam Gul, pulled him outside, and, getting a thick stick, beat him till he was black and blue all over, and then left him with a kick and a curse.

That night 'Alam Gul found that all his clothes had been taken away, and he was left with only a loin-cloth. This had been done lest he should run away, and escape, they thinking that in a few days, finding the hopelessness of his position, he would relent and submit. Six days he remained thus, being given nothing more than a bit of stale bread once a day and a little water.

On the seventh morning an uncle came, and sat down by his side, and began to commiserate him and profess his sympathy for the hardships he was undergoing. He then untied the corner of his shawl, and got out some sweetmeats and gave them to 'Alam Gul, as some amends for the privations he had been undergoing. Something, however, in his demeanor made 'Alam Gul suspicious, and he excused himself for not eating the sweetmeats at once, and put them in a handkerchief by his side.

When his uncle had departed, he gave some of the sweetmeats to one of the dogs in the house. Very shortly afterwards the dog began to vomit and show signs of pain. He was now sure that the plan had been to poison him in such a way that his death might be reported as due to some ordinary sickness, and he made up his mind to escape at all costs.

It was midday, and nearly every one was enjoying a sleep during the oppressive noon of a summer day. Searching about he found a shirt and an old turban and, donning these, he slipped out, and was soon through the deserted village street out in the fields beyond. He reached Kohat, and came to the village of a schoolmate, who gave him shelter and food for that night in his house, and a pair of shoes for his feet, which had become blistered on the hot rocks over which he had been travelling. On the fifth day after leaving his village, very footsore, tired, and ragged, he appeared in the mission compound at Bannu.

He was now nineteen years of age, so nothing stood in the way of his being admitted as a catechumen, of which he was greatly desirous, and the following Easter he was baptized into the Christian church.

SENTENCE SERMONS

The Bible is the poor man's friend, a book to keep the rich in order. *Charles Kingsley.*

If riches increase, set not your heart thereon. Ps. 62.10.

Wealth is power, and there is no power on earth that God does not claim as his of right, and for the exercise of which he will not call to account those to whom the power is entrusted.—*Dr. W. R. Nicol.*

The wealth of a man consists in the number of things he loves and blesses, and in the number of things he is loved and blessed by. *Carlyle.*

A millionaire in soul will be blessed and be a blessing, if he is also a millionaire in gold. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

One day a man was criticising, as he always enjoyed doing, the failings of certain Christians. His friend waited for a pause and then quickly asked, "Have you read the Bible?" "Certainly." Have you read the parable of the rich man and Lazarus?" "Of course." "Well," then said the friend, "you remind me of the dogs in that parable." "How so?" questioned the critic. "Well, all the dogs did was to lick the sores of Lazarus, and it seems to me that you are doing the same, you are always looking out for sore spots, the failings, of good Christians, and you have no eyes for their good qualities." Do you know any such people?

A man died recently whose estate was valued at sixty millions. A writer sent an account of the man's life to a syndicate of newspapers, and one of the editors sent back word that the man was *merely* rich, there was nothing else about him of interest, and his readers would not care to hear about him, hence he should not print the article. He who is merely rich is poor indeed.

Give me sympathy for all the poor; whether their poverty be that of purse, or talent, or culture, or opportunity. Yet may I ever hold in highest honor those who in great wealth and high station serve thee and their fellow men with a generous aim and a humble heart. *Dr. William DeWitt Hyde.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The attitude of James toward the rich—they gain their wealth fraudulently and spend it selfishly, Jas. 5-16; and that of Jesus toward riches—riches are a temptation, and a responsibility.

2. The world's great problem in the past has been poverty; the world's greater problem in the future will be wealth. Said a Justice of the Supreme Court, "I regard corporate wealth as the supreme peril of the United States." See "The New Problem of Wealth," *Homiletic Review,* Dec. '08, page 469: *Jesus Christ and the Social Question.* F. G. Peabody, pages 226-266, 327: "Government Regulation of Wealth, *The Outlook,* Dec. 25, '09. "The Right Use of Wealth," Carnegie, *World's Work,* Dec. '08: "Masters of Capital in America," *McClure's Magazine* beginning with the Nov. '10 number.

3. The problem of Lazarus at our gate.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. In Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount what extra words are given in connection with the exhortations of this lesson? 2. Who wrote the words in the last section of our lesson? 3. What is said about the treatment of enemies in Ex. 23.4; Prov. 25.21? 4. When did Jesus pray for those who despitefully used him? (Lk. 23.34.) 5. Explain the allusion in verse 38. (Clipping, page 190.) 6. In what book and what chapter are Paul's great words about love found? (1 Cor. 13.) 7. What chapter and what verse in Matthew and in Luke contain the Golden Rule? 8. What is the aim for which the Gospel of Matthew was written? (Clipping, page 27.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is the connection of the selection from Romans with the first part of the lesson? 2. When did Jesus pray for those who despitefully used him? 3. What is the meaning of offering the other cheek? 4. When did Jesus not do this? What does his example show as to the way this exhortation is to be taken? 5 Are verses 29, 30, 37, 38 to be taken literally? (Clipping, page 192.) 6. What does the Golden Rule mean? 7. Is the Golden Rule workable? 8. What is the effect of applying the Rule to one's enemies? 9. What instances can you recall of the way Jesus treated enemies? 10. During the week find an opportunity for doing a kindness to some one whom you do not like, and tell us about it next Sunday.

Note Book and Memory Work. Commit to memory Paul's words about love in 1 Cor. 13 and Luke 6.27-38. For Note Book Work, see page 17, Introduction.

LESSON VI—MAY 12

THE LAW OF LOVE

Golden Text

Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. Rom. 13.9

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 6.27-38; Rom. 13.8-10. The Law of Love. **T.** Matt. 5.38-48. Marks of True Discipleship. **W.** Luke 10.25-37. The Good Samaritan. **T.** Rom. 14.1-10. The Law of Liberty. **F.** Rom. 12.9-21. Christian Manliness. **S.** Jas. 5.1-6. The Self-indulgent Warned. **S.** 1 Cor. 13. Supremacy of Love. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 6.27-38; Rom. 13.8-10 READ Mt. 5.43-48 COMMIT vv 27, 28

Lk. 6.27 But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, 28 bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you. 29 To him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also. 30 Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. 31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. 32 And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even sinners love those that love them. 33 And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same. 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much. 35 But love your enemies, and do *them* good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil. 36 Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. 37 And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release and ye shall be released: 38 give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

Rom. 13.8 Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

27-28. *Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.* "This had been distinctly the spirit of the highest part of the Law and the Old Testament. Ex. 23.4; If thou meet thine enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. Prov. 25.21; If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat. Yet in many passages it had practically been said 'to men of old time,' at any rate in some cases, 'thou shalt hate thine enemy:' Dt. 7.2; 23.6; 1 Ch. 20.3; 2 Sam. 12.31; Ps. 137.8, 9. On these passages the fierce fanaticism of the Pharisiac Jews, after the exile, had so excessively fed, that we find the Talmud ringing with precepts of hatred the most bitter against all Gentiles, and the ancients had, not unnaturally, been led to the conclusion that detestation of all but Jews was a part of the Jewish religion" (*Farrar*).—*Do good... bless...pray.* "The sentiment of love is worth much, but it must bear fruit in act. So the practical manifestations of it follow. Deeds of kindness, words of blessing, and highest of all, and the best help to fulfilling the other two, prayer, are to be our meek answers to evil" (*Maclaren*).—*Pray for them that despitefully use you.* See Christ's prayer for his murderers, Lk. 23.34.

29-30. The precepts in verse 29 illustrate in a striking, concrete way, another form of love, Christ's rule of conduct in the face of wrongful treatment: that they are to be observed in the spirit and not in the letter his own conduct recorded in Jn. 18.22, 23, shows. "There may be resistance to wrong and refusal of a request, if love prompts to these. If it is better for the other man that a Christian should not let him have his way or wish, and if the Christian, in resisting or refusing, is honestly actuated by love, then he is fulfilling the precept when he says 'No' to some petition, or when he resists robbery. We must live near Jesus Christ to know when such limitations of the precept come in, and to make sure of our motives" (*Maclaren*).—*From him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also.* There is a Latin proverb, quoted by Dr. Broadus, which resembles this saying: If one sues you for the egg, give him the hen also. (See below)—*Give to him that asketh thee.* "The spirit of the precept is large-handed but *thoughtful* charity" (*Farrar*).

35-38. *Never despairing.* Some ancient authorities read *despairing of no man,* RVm. *Judge not...condemn not.* These general statements are not meant to be taken without qualification: the example of Jesus shows when judging and condemning are a duty. Judge as ye would be judged; verse 31.—*Give and it shall be given unto you.* Treat another generously and he will treat you generously.—*With what measure...again.* This is a Jewish proverb. *Mete.* Measure—*Into your bosom.* In lieu of pockets the Jews used a fold of their outer garment, or the girdle that fastened it.

Rom. 13.8-10. *Owe.* It is interesting to note that our words *debt* and *duty* come from the same Latin root, *debere,* to owe.—*His neighbor.* Greek, *the other.* Compare 1 Cor. 6.1; 10.24; Gal. 6.4, RVm.—*Hath fulfilled the law.* Explained in verse 10.—*For this.* Having spoken of love as the fulfilling of the law, Paul now mentions some of the laws recorded in Ex. 20.1-17 and Dt. 5.6-21, the seventh, sixth, eighth, and tenth of the ten Commandments, which one who loves his neighbor fulfills.—*Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.* See 1 Cor. 13.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

28-30. I venture to think that the ordinary reader, having a little humor in his composition, is not confused by these peculiarities of the teaching of Jesus. He perceives that what is described is an ideal; it is with the direction in which every one's face is turned that the Teacher is concerned, rather than with the several steps of the journey; it is not to slaves of the letter he is addressing himself, but to lovers of the spirit. In short, it is the love of man he is teaching, not an array of new commandments intended to rival the endless traditions of the scribes. *James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

36. *Be ye merciful even as your Father is merciful.*

> It is an attribute of God himself,
> And earthly power doth then shew likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice. *Shakespeare.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

29. *To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other.* In the first century there was a tariff regulating the fines that might be collected for injuries received. "If a man has given his neighbor a box on the ear, let him give him a *maneh.* If he has struck him on the cheek, let him give him two hundred *suz*" (a little over thirty-five dollars in value).

29. *From him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also.* In Palestine, the universal and indispensable garments were two: first, the *chetoneth,* the inner vest or shirt, rather unfortunately rendered in our version *coat.* This was a long, loose garment, generally without sleeves, and reaching to the knees or ankles. It was retained at night. Over this during the day was worn the *me'il,* rendered *cloak* in our version, answering to our coat, which had loose sleeves, and was larger than the shirt. This was usually, especially when traveling, fastened round the waist by a girdle, the folds of which were used as pockets for carrying small articles. The *me'il* was always used at night

as a blanket, thrown over the sleeper; hence the command in the law of Moses that the (outer) garment taken in pledge was to be restored to the owner in the evening, for he did not require it while working in the day, but needed it as a covering at night. *Tristram.*

The Coat and the Cloak

31. *As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.* The Talmud declares that a Gentile came to Rabbi Shammai and asked to have the Law explained to him in the time that he could stand on one foot. Rabbi Shammai drove him off with his staff, and he then sought Rabbi Hillel, who fulfilled his request by answering: Do not to thy neighbor what is hateful to thyself, that is the whole Law. The "Golden Rule" of Confucius is similar to that of Hillel's: Whatsoever we would that men should not do to us, we should not do to them. Mr. Wu, formerly the Chinese ambassador to the United States, says that the passive life of the Chinese is due to this Golden Rule of Confucius and the aggressive civilization of the Anglo-Saxon to the Golden Rule of Christ. The Chinese have been standing still for centuries: they are beginning to adopt Christianity and the aggressive Golden Rule.

38. *Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over.* One of the characteristic sights of Palestine after the harvest has been gathered in, is the measuring out of wheat and barley, which sometimes takes place in the common market but more frequently in the courtyard of the purchaser's house. A professional measurer is always present on these occasions, and in the presence of the seller and buyer or their representatives, duly proceeds to ascertain the contents of each sack. This is done by measuring out the grain in a circular wooden measure in the shape of our own bushel measure, but less deep, called in Arabic a *timneh.* The measurer seats himself cross-legged on the ground and proceeds to shovel the wheat or barley into the *timneh* with both hands until it is partly full, then he shakes it down and fills it again. When it is full to the brim he presses upon it with his hands, and then builds up a cone in the center. *James Neil,* in *Palestine Explored.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

In Luke's Gospel love as the keynote of the laws of the kingdom of heaven follows the Beatitude of the persecuted. Jesus had told his disciples that they would be excommunicated and hated for his sake; he now adds that their only weapon against their persecutors was to be the weapon of love.

The verses added from Romans 13, are Paul's words in his letter to the Romans, concerning the obligation of universal love in respect to all duties to all men. Paul has just been exhorting his readers to obedience to rulers, and has bidden them "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor;" and he passes naturally on to a consideration of that universal debt due by all to all, the love of one to another.

For geographical setting, see page 174. Assign paragraphs 48-52 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

There are many admonitions in this lesson, and if you attempt to teach them all your pupils will take away with them nothing definite. Recall by questions the scene on the Mount as you pictured it last week, (Show again Tissot's picture No. 45) and say that Jesus is telling his hearers how they should act to-

wards others. One beautiful thing he said we call the Golden Rule. Write it on the blackboard in its familiar wording—Do to others as you would have others do to you. While it is practically always best to have pupils, however young, memorize the exact words of Scripture, you may well make an exception with this verse. Explain what it means and why it is called the Golden Rule. Then give it in the words of verse 31, and tell how Teddy learned that it was for boys as well as men, and how he put it into practice (condensed from a long story in "Zion's Herald" by Helen M. Richardson).

Teddy was scowling at the blackboard on which Miss Day had written: And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. "It says *men,* it doesn't say anything about *boys,*" he muttered to himself, as his eyes fell to his desk where they saw a copybook that he had idly taken from Chauncy's desk and had spattered with ink. "When you get to be a man you're supposed to be better," he added to himself; "but boys just can't help 'paying off' when they can get a chance. I've been watching for mine all day. Reckon Chauncy'll wish he hadn't dropped my book in the mud the other day, and then lied about it. And that's just what he did do, for Mansfield says he saw him." That evening Teddy's father opened the Bible and read aloud, as he always did before Teddy went up to bed, and he, too, read this Golden Rule. "Does it mean boys, too, father, as well as men?" Teddy questioned. "Certainly, my son, men are only boys grown tall," his father answered. It was a very sober boy that went upstairs to bed that night. The next day in school Miss Day called for the verse that had been written on the board, and after it had been repeated by all the school Teddy asked to speak. "My father says that means boys as well as men," he said. "I blotted Chauncy's copy-book yesterday. I did it because he dropped mine in the mud, and I wanted to pay him off. But it isn't what I'd like to have him do to me, and I want to 'pologize." When Teddy finished, Mansfield had something to say, too. "Chauncy didn't drop Teddy's book. I did it. I told Teddy it was like Chauncy to lie out of it, and I want to apologize, too."

Impress the thought that boys and girls must often ask themselves the question, "How would I wish to have another treat me if I were in his place?" Give the dialogue, page 192. Call for this stanza:

"However others act toward thee
Act thou toward them as seemeth right;
And whatsoever others be,
Be thou the child of love and light."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON.

For Younger Pupils. A six-year-old was being taught his Sunday-school lesson by his mother. Love your enemies, she read; "You must love your enemies, the people you don't like," she added in explanation, "you must love." "Oh, now, mother," said the boy, "that's just bosh!" Question your pupils and find out what they think about this subject. Explain that you can't love everybody in the same way, but that there is some good in everyone, and they must look for that. Then show how the application of the principle of the Golden Rule will help them to feel more kindly toward their enemies. It is wonderful how doing a kindness to one whom we dislike will make us feel kindly toward that one. Call for your pupil's experiences during the week, as assigned, (No. 10).

For Older Pupils. A little Navajo Indian at Jewett, New Mexico, was kept in at recess one day for some small offence. She opened her Bible and read till she found Luke 6.31, and then with a sly twinkle in her eye as she watched her teacher, she repeated it aloud. What was the verse? What was the thought in that little Indian's mind? Was that an apt application of the Golden Rule? Was it a correct one? Why not? (After a discussion of the meaning of this Rule, page 192, lead your pupils to see and express its bearing upon the love of enemies, that most difficult command with which our lesson begins. Recall the words of Francis de Sales: It is easy enough to love those who are agreeable and obliging—what fly is not attracted by sugar and honey? But to love one who is cross, perverse, tiresome, is as unpleasant a process as chewing pills.

Nevertheless this is the real touchstone of brotherly love. The best way of practising it is to put yourselves in the place of him who tries you, and to see how you would wish him to treat you if you had his defects.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I THE GOLDEN RULE

The Golden Rule requires the Putting of Oneself in the Other's Place. As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them, is one of Christ's many statements that are to be observed in the spirit rather than in the exact letter. We do not serve others best by doing for them just what we with our circumstances and desires would wish done to us, but by doing for them just what we think would be best for ourselves were we in their circumstances and actuated by their desires. The physician should do for his patient what he would have done to himself were he in that patient's place; the employer should treat his employee as he himself would wish to be treated were he in the employee's place. The principle involves more trouble than the mere doing of a kindness to another; it requires thought, the effort of putting ourselves in that other's place to find out what would be the best for that one in his position. And the higher the demand that we make for our own best, truest good, the less danger will there be of our doing a thoughtlessly kind deed for another that is not for his highest good. If a beggar asks to be fed and clothed that he may himself live in idleness, we shall fulfil Christ's Golden Rule as well as his rule of giving to him that asks by furnishing that beggar with the means of earning his own food and clothing.

Did he know the Golden Rule? Somewhere I have read a dialogue something like this:

Father. I should think, Tommy, that you might find some boy to play with you. Now what's the matter with Johnny Jenkins and the little Drake boy?

Tommy, contemptuously. Pooh! Why, they're a whole year younger than I am. I couldn't play with them.

Father. Well, there's Jack Spear and Willie Hanson. Won't they do?

Tommy, wistfully. Yes, but they're a year older than I am, so the mean things won't play with me.

He knew the Golden Rule. A certain mining company was coming to grief. The shareholders would sustain very heavy losses. Among them was one much liked for his genial ways and kindness of heart. One who was in the secrets of the company determined to advise him to sell out. He went to see him and hinted that it would be to his advantage to sell quickly.

"Why?" asked Mr. N—. "Well, you know, the value of the mines is greatly depreciated." "When I bought the shares I took that risk." "Yes; but now you should take the opportunity of selling while you can, so as not to lose anything." "And supposing I don't sell; what then?" "Then you will probably lose all you have." And if I do sell, somebody else will lose instead of me?" "Yes, I suppose so." "Do you suppose Jesus Christ would sell out? "That is hardly a fair question. I suppose he would not." "I am a Christian and I wish to follow my Master; therefore I shall not sell."

He did not, and soon after lost everything, and had to begin life again; but when men in that region want to point out a Christian, they know where to find one. *The Inland.*

The Problem.

And well for Gain if it ungrudging yields
Labor its just demand; and well for Ease
If in the uses of its own, it sees
No wrong to him who tills its pleasant fields
And spreads the table of its luxuries,
The interest of the rich man and the poor
Are one and same, inseparable evermore;
And, when scant wage or labor fail to give
Food, shelter, raiment, wherewithal to live,
Need has its rights, necessity its claim.

Yea, even self-wrought misery and shame
Test well the charity suffering long and kind.
The home-pressed question of the age can find
No answer in the catch-words of the blind
Leaders of blind. Solution there is none
Save in the Golden Rule of Christ alone. *John G. Whittier.*

II Greater Expectations

What do ye more than they? You love those who love you—so do sinners. You do good to those who do good to you—so do sinners. You lend to those from whom you hope to receive—so do sinners. Of you much more is expected. Love your enemies—this sinners do not do. Do good to your enemies—this sinners do not do. Lend to others from whom you may not expect return—this sinners do not do. Sinners stand stiffly on their rights: the Christian yields his rights and suffers wrong, endures a blow, and offers the other cheek, prevents a lawsuit by yielding more than he claimed, submits to the demands of a borrower. By these thought-compelling illustrations, not meant to be applied literally without thought, Jesus declares how much more is rightly expected of his followers than of those who know him not as Lord.

Do all these things because you are sons of the Most High: be merciful even as he is merciful. Of Christians it is required that they do the utmost that they can in their relations with others. When an officer is courtmartialed for a disaster happening in the army or navy, if it is proved that "he did not do his utmost to prevent it" he loses his commission. There is a chief of a tribe in South Africa who made the same demand of his people. "If you become better men and women by being Christians, you may remain so," he told his people; "but if you don't, I won't let you be Christians at all." The spirit of the Christian religion demands of us more than exact justice in our dealings with others; it requires all transactions to be enacted in the spirit of love, the doing exceeding abundantly above all that any man can ask or think.

Pertinent Questions. Men look at us in our daily conventional worldly round, and ask ironically, curiously: "You are a Christian, are you? You are a believer in the Sermon on the Mount? What sign do you give of it? What proof do you offer? Strangely remote you seem. Nothing about you, in your appearance, in your habit, to detach you from others—from ordinary men of the world. Nothing to suggest your kinship with this high race of saints and martyrs who follow the banner of the Son of Man. What is there in you to recall him? Where in you can we see and find him who was born King of the Jews?"

For though we are sure of a basal hidden loyalty to Christ which is far keener than those questioners suspect, yet there is so much to pull us off our true ground, such swervings, such misdirections, such accumulated rubbish, such conventional obscuration, such perilous usurpation by which the true royalty of Christ over our conscience is for ever being dislodged. *Henry Scott Holland,* in *Where is Jesus Christ?*

A Christian should be always "On Duty." An Englishman was sitting in a car waiting for the train to start when he saw a railroad inspector approaching. As he came opposite the window where this man sat a drunken ruffian snatched a flower that the inspector was wearing in his buttonhole and threw it away. The official's face flushed and his fist clenched, and then he set his lips tightly and passed on. "Sir, you took that splendidly," the man said to the inspector when he came into the train. "If I hadn't been on duty, I would have knocked him down," the inspector replied. A Christian is always on duty. Virtues are expected of him that are not looked for in others.

III Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself

Who is thy Neighbor? As Bishop McDowell suggests, there is not a word in the Gospels about apartment houses or big hotels, social customs are not what they were in those days, the fish trade is not what it was in Peter's time, and yet after all these centuries and changed conditions, human life finds in the teaching of Jesus on this and all other questions, illuminated by his life

as all his teaching must be, a perfectly luminous answer. The word neighbor in its Anglo-Saxon derivation means a nigh dweller, near-dweller; its meaning as used by Jesus is interpreted in the Parable of the Good Samaritan: a neighbor is one whom we can help, whether he lives next door or across the seas. Every person, says Channing, is near to you whom you can bless; he is nearest whom you can bless most.

The Nature of the Love. Many an impulse of Christian love finds its personal application much more difficult than its emotional expression. Philanthropists bid us love the poor, but a specific poor person is often unpicturesque and sometimes repelling. Reformers would have us love the human race, but this general principle becomes much obscured when individuals of a race black, brown, or yellow, are brought into objectionable proximity. Christian love becomes, under such conditions, no easy surrender to general good nature, but a specific victory of the will. It stands before the complex mystery of another personality, and sees reflected in that neighbor a similar mingling of the desirable and repelling which it discovers in itself, and, by applying reflection to affection, is taught tolerance, justice, patience, and hope. *Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.*

How to learn to Love one's Neighbor. Jesus Christ is the great Unifier, and we learn to love one another as we learn to love him. I have heard of an old and white-haired man who was standing fascinated in a picture gallery before a picture of the Christ. After gazing at it a few moments he murmured, as if to himself, with face all aglow, "Bless him, I love him." A stranger standing near overheard him, and said, "Brother, I love him too," and clasped his hand. A third caught the sentence, and said, "I love him, too," and soon there was in front of that picture a little company of people with hand clasped to hand, utter strangers to one another, but made one by their common love to Jesus Christ. A common love to Christ will issue in the clasped hand between man and man and nation and nation. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

"Love me, too!" The speaker was a little dark-haired maiden, and her big brown eyes were welling up with tears. She was one of the deserted child-wives of India's shadowed households. As she was lame and helpless from a diseased knee-joint, and useless as a slave to him, her husband had turned her out upon the roadside to die. The pitiable little crouching figure drew the attention of a police officer, who brought her to the nearest Christian mission hospital, where now she was being tenderly nursed back to health. It was the hour of evening prayer, and the doctor had lifted upon her knee the baby of the ward, also a deserted girl. The little child wife hungrily watched the gentle caresses of the white hand on the wee brown head that nestled confidingly on the missionary's shoulder, and slipping off the hospital bed she crept up to the pair. Taking the good doctor's hand in hers, she laid it on her own bare head, and uttered the wistful cry, "Love me, too."

"Love me, too!" It is the cry uttered or unexpressed of each little sufferer who enters our wards. *Irene Barnes,* in *Between Life and Death.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Only the balances of God are perfect. *F. W. Farrar.*

Hold fast to God with the right hand and stretch out the left to the world. *Floyd W. Tomkins.*

The love of God cannot be where compassionate love of man is wanting. *J. Gregory Mantle.*

I will permit no enemy to degrade my soul to the level of hatred. *Booker Washington.*

Love is the Holy Spirit within;
Hate, the unpardonable sin! *Longfellow.*

True religion in God's sight is nothing but righteous living in the love of man and God. *Borden P. Bowne.*

Enmity should only stimulate love, as a gash in some tree bearing precious balsam makes the fragrant treasure flow. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Make the best of everything, think the best of everybody, hope the best for yourself, and give to all, all love. *Dickens.*

The immediate need of the world at this moment is not more of us, but, if I may use the expression, a better brand of us. *Henry Drummond.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Ask yourself this question of Dr. Babcock's: What have I done to-day that nobody but a Christian would do? "God expects great things of you; take care that you do not disappoint him."

When you have made a mistake you wish allowance made for circumstances, misunderstandings, good intentions, or misinformation or contrition. Do you stop to think of these things when another has made the mistake or has done you a wrong?

Standards of morality and life have varied from age to age: the privilege of Christians is to look above all these standards to a standard of absolute righteousness.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

I The King's Requirements of his Subjects.
1. Love of enemies: shown in doing them good, blessing them and praying for them, 27, 28.
2. Endurance of wrong: shown in not returning a blow, in giving more than is demanded, 29, 30.
3. Observance of the "Golden Rule," 31.
4. Greater goodness than that of "sinners"; shown in loving those who hate as well as those who love them; in doing good to those who do evil as well as to those who do good to them; in lending to those from whom nothing will be received as well as to those who will return the favor, 32-35a.
5. Kindness and mercifulness, 35b, 36.
6. Absence of censoriousness, 37.
7. Generosity, 38.

II. Love the Fulfillment of the Law, Rom. 13.8-10.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The two fundamentals of American diplomacy are (1) the Monroe Doctrine and (2) the Golden Rule of Jesus Christ (*John Hay*). Discuss the Golden Rule in business.

2. A consideration of all the statements of Jesus concerning his authority.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What is the meaning of "jot" and "tittle"? 2. How did the Jews classify the commandments? (Clipping, page 198.) 3. Which of the ten commandments is given in verse 21? Where in the Old Testament is it found? 4. What is the meaning of the expressions in verse 22? (Footnote of Bible.) 5. What did you learn last year about the name *Gehenna*, or hell? (Clipping, page 197.) 6. What is the meaning of "haply"? 7. What five great addresses are given in Matthew? (Clipping, p. 28.) 8. What incidents connected with the infancy of Jesus are found only in Matthew? What parables? (Clipping, p. 28.)

Questions to think about. 1. What did Jesus mean by saying he came to fulfil the law? (Clipping, p. 196.) 2. What example of Jesus have we already had which showed his loyalty to the law? (Mk. 1.44, Lesson X of First Quarter.) 3. What does Jesus mean by verse 22? (Clipping, p. 197.) 4. How is anger related to murder? 5. What altar, verse 23, is meant? (Clipping, page 197.) 6. In our last lesson, how did Jesus say to avoid a quarrel? 7. The Chinese write the word "quarrel" by putting the "character" or representation, of two women side by side: why women, not men? 8. The keeping of what command in the last lesson would make it impossible to commit the sins mentioned in verses 21-26?

Note Book Work. See page 17, Introduction. Commit to memory all of the lesson for next week.

LESSON VII—MAY 19

THE OLD LAW AND THE NEW LIFE

Golden Text

He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. Rom. 13.8

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 5.17-26. The Old Law and the New Life. **T.** Jer. 31.31-37. The New Covenant. **W.** Ezek. 36.22-31. The New Heart. **T.** Acts 2.37-47. Unselfish Devotedness. **F.** Ps. 119.1-8. Obedience Insures Blessedness. **S.** 1 John 3.10-24. Love and Hate Incompatible. **S.** 1 John 4.7-21. The Supreme Test. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 5.17-26 COMMIT vv 17, 18

17 Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire. 23 If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, 24 leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art with him in the way; lest haply the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the last farthing.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

17. *Think not.* He well knew that this is just what the Pharisees would think and say.—*Destroy.* Pull down, set aside.—*The law or the prophets.* The Pentateuch and the rest of the Old Testament.—"Everything has its end," the rabbis said: "the heaven and the earth have their end; there is only one thing excepted which has no end, and that is the Law."—*Fulfil.* Fill full, complete, in the sense, as Theophylact says, that a painter does not destroy the sketch but rather fills it. The New Testament is latent in the Old, and the Old Testament is patent in the New, says Augustine. The way in which Jesus completed the law is shown in verses 21-48, where he teaches the moral principles underlying it.

18. Compare Lk. 16.17; Mt. 24.35.—*Verily.* Truly.—*Jot.* Greek, *iota.* "It stands for *Yod,* the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet."—*Tittle.* "Literally, little horn, one of those minute projections by which otherwise similar Hebrew letters are distinguished." Compare our phrase, "The dot of an *i* or the stroke of a *t.*"

19. "'What, then, are the commandments?' In answer to this question, Jesus

in Mt. 19.18 referred to the moral portions of the Decalogue, and not to any ceremonial enactment. Compare Rom. 13.9" (*Slater*).

20. *The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.* Who kept the letter rather than the spirit of the law.

21. *To them of old time.* Notice the change from *by them,* AV: the pronoun in the Greek is in the dative case: God is the speaker.—*Thou shalt not kill.* Ex. 20.13; Dt. 5.17.—*In danger of.* The Greek ἔνοχος means *held* or *bound by,* hence *liable, subject to.* As Shakespeare's use shows—You stand within his danger, do you not?—This English expression originally meant *in the power of.* —*The judgment.* Every village had its local tribunal of seven men, Dt. 16.18; 2 Ch. 19.5.

22. *But I say unto you.* Thus claiming equal authority with God.—*Angry* Many ancient authorities insert *without cause,* RVm.—*Brother.* Fellow-man. —*Raca.* An expression of contempt, RVm.—*Council.* The Sanhedrin, the supreme tribunal at Jerusalem.—*Thou fool.* Or, *Moreh,* a Hebrew expression of condemnation.—*Of.* Greek, *unto* or *into,* RVm.—*Hell of fire.* Greek, *Gehenna of fire,* RVm. As we learned from our lessons of last year, Gehenna was the Valley of Hinnom in or near Jerusalem, where children were made to pass through the fire to Moloch. The bodies of criminals were burnt there, and the word Gehenna became a synonym for the place of final punishment, hell.—Many scholars understand that as there are three degrees of punishment, so there are three degrees of guilt and anger, anger expressed in contemptuous terms (Raca), and anger expressed in still more abusive terms (Moreh). But Moreh cannot be called a much worse term than Raca, the expressions being nearly equivalent; Jesus is affirming in an emphatic way that unrighteous anger, expressed in abusive words, deserves as well as murder does, the severest punishment. The suggestion is given in the "Journal of Biblical Literature" that Matthew omitted the words, *It is also said* before the second statement—whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council,—because all Jews would understand that this was one of the traditions of the elders, and that the latter part of this verse is Jesus' interpretation of this statement, in which he changes the Aramaic epithet *Raca* to the Greek *Moreh,* and makes the crime universal.

23-24. *If therefore.* Since anger is criminal, one should seek reconciliation with the one he has offended.—*The altar.* The great altar in the inner court of the temple, where the priests sacrificed the offerings brought.—*Aught.* Anything.—*Leave there thy gift.* There is need of haste.—*First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* "It is far easier to give up a coin than it is to give up a quarrel. It is easier to lay down a generous offering than to lay down a long-continued grudge" (*G. H. Morrison*).

25-26. See Lk. 12.58, 59.—*Adversary.* At law, creditor, verse 26.—*In the way.* On the way to have the trouble settled by a judge.—*Haply.* Perhaps.—*Farthing.* A small Roman copper coin equal to about two-fifths of a cent.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *Think not that I came to destroy the law, or the prophets.* Yet his teaching proves a radical departure from the law and an offence to the legalists. How can he be at once a destroyer and a fulfiller, a radical and a conservative? It is because he finds the reality of the law in the ideals of the law; and in destroying the formal law he is fulfilling the ideal law, as the ripening of a seed involves the bursting of its shell. *Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.*

22. *Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca.*

Nay! let it pass!
I will not answer so.
Lest words on words to greater diff'rence grow:
Unguarded moments come to all—to me
Oft needs the trust of loving charity. *Chambers' Journal.*

23. *And there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee.*

Disputes, though short, are far too long
Where both alike are in the wrong. *Cowper.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

19. *One of these least commandments.* The Jews were in the habit of classifying the various commandments as greater and less, sometimes comparing those which they reckoned least to the smallest letters of the alphabet. And although they made unwarranted and artificial distinctions even among moral duties, yet the Saviour does here clearly recognize some commandments as less important. So in Mt. 23.23 he declares ethical duties to be "weightier" than the duty of tithing herbs. *John A. Broadus, Matthew.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Our last lesson from the Sermon on the Mount taught that far more was required of members of the Kingdom of Heaven than of those without the kingdom. To-day's selection from that Sermon bears upon the same thought: the Great Teacher is telling his disciples that no one can even enter the Kingdom unless his righteousness is truer than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. First he refers to the relation that his teaching concerning righteousness bears to the teaching of the Old Testament, to which the Scribes and Pharisees held. It includes that teaching and also far more. Jesus had chosen Matthew, a publican, for one of his close disciples, he had not kept the rabbinical rules in regard to the Sabbath, and no doubt Scribes and Pharisees were accusing him of destroying the law given by Moses. This he disclaims. He is not opposing the law; he is fulfilling it, carrying it out to its fullest meaning, whereas the Scribes and Pharisees were concerned with keeping its mere letter. And then he goes on to cite specific laws and show that the old ideal declared only acts sinful, the new ideal declares intentions sinful as well as acts.

For the geographical setting see p. 174. Assign paragraphs 50-53, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

A writer in speaking about "the education of the central nervous system" says that it is always too late to be what you might have been. Psychology teaches that there are brain cells which, if allowed to pass the plastic stage without being subjected to the proper stimuli or training, will never fully develop. What is not done for the child physically and intellectually when it should have been done, never will be done. Is it always too late to be what you might have been morally and spiritually? Is it too late for your pupils? Yours are golden days in which to furnish the proper stimuli to their right thinking and right doing.

Again to-day's lesson in its entirety is beyond your pupils' comprehension; the wording must be wholly omitted: but it has just the lessons that your pupils need. Recall the Golden Rule and last Sunday's Golden Text. Show that if boys and girls keep these rules, they will not speak angry words nor enter into quarrels. Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount warned his disciples against these things. After talking about the wrong that one does himself when he gives way to anger, tell them how a four-year-old boy learned to control his temper. (The President of the Chicago Kindergarten College gives the incident.) A little boy was "quick-tempered," and in anger would often say harsh things to his two-year-old sister, and even strike her. One day when he had done this, his mother called him to her. "Philip," she said quietly, "it makes mother feel very sad to hear you speak that way to little sister." "I know it does," the boy said, "but I just can't help it." "Do you know, Philip," his mother continued, "that sometimes you make me feel just that way about you? Would you like to know what I do to keep from speaking cross words to you?" The boy looked soberly into her eyes and said "Yes." "When I feel the quick, angry words coming up I shut my eyes for a moment and say, 'Please, God, help me to be strong.'" The boy made no reply, but, kissing his mother, he slipped away and went back to play with his sister. Soon he was angry again and with his arm in the air ready to strike her he cried, "You shan't do that, sister." But at once he caught himself and shut his eyes tight, and his arm dropped to his side. When he opened his eyes he said kindly: "All right, sister, you can have that, I will take this."

It takes two to make a quarrel, you will teach. The story on page 201 is for you.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever read about a masked highwayman who stopped a lonely man on a lonely road and levelling a pistol at his head cried out, "Your money or your life"? And the man usually thought that resistance was useless, didn't he, and he gave over all his valuables thankful to escape with his life? Did you ever stop to think that some boys and some girls treat their tempers in this way, as if they themselves were not responsible when angry words are freely given out, as if there were no use in offering resistance and keeping them back, as if there were some power compelling them to let themselves go and say whatever their angry feelings lead them to say? Did you ever hear such a boy or girl say, "I couldn't help it"? Jesus told his disciples that they could and must help it if they were his true followers. He used some very forcible words in regard to anger. What did he say? (After a discussion of the meaning and force of verses 21 and 23, and the second topic, explain how Jesus' teaching is not a destruction but a fulfillment of the law and the prophets, the thought with which our lesson text begins.)

For Older Pupils. The royal duke who said audibly after the reading of each of the ten commandments, "Never did that," had never thought of these commandments in their larger meaning as interpreted by Jesus Christ. We have a chance to test ourselves to-day by the standard set up by him in the Sermon on the Mount.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I I CAME NOT TO DESTROY, BUT TO FULFIL

Jesus came not to destroy. To the men of revelation in the Old Testament it was vouchsafed to make known the mind of God as to the type of character and conduct which he approved. All their doctrine on this subject Jesus accepts, sympathizing with it from the bottom of his heart. The tone of his references all through his ministry amply confirms this; for they are not only frequent, but full of affection and reverence, like the references of a son to the utterances of an honored father. Christ accepted the education of the Old Testament in its entirety. We cannot now read the finest efforts of pagan philosophy in this region without being astonished at the blots and the blanks by which they are disfigured. Even the circle about Socrates had no conception of the inviolable personal purity which is commonplace to those who have been instructed by Jesus. In Cicero's delightful treatise on Old Age there are traits of selfishness, expressed with the utmost *naïveté,* which shock the moral sense of the least sensitive Christian. The truth is, as some one has observed, the pagan world not only never produced one holy man, but never even drew the picture of one. The Hebrew Scriptures soar infinitely higher; yet even they come far short of the level on which Jesus moves. In what he said about divorce—that Moses gave them his law on the subject on account of the hardness of their hearts—we obtain a hint of the true point of view. The morality of the Old Testament was divine; yet it was human, because modified by circumstances and in adaptation to the stage of development at which those stood to whom it was given. So there was room for a new revelation of the divine mind and will; and this Jesus had come to make known to the world. *James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

He kept all that was Good in the Past. The true reformer is never an iconoclast, bent only on destruction, ever denouncing, ever tearing down the old without an eye to what is to replace the old. Men cannot start fresh as if the past had brought no gains and no conditions. Progress is nothing if it is not growth, and growth implies roots. Every human institution has roots in the past, long roots. To cut the roots is to kill the plant.

Our Lord's work was essentially related to the life of the past and of the present; and so it has been the life of the future ever since. It was intensely original, and aimed at reformation so great that it amounted to revolution;

but it was joined on to the life, and carried forward all that was good in the past. *Hugh Black,* in *The Gift of Influence.*

He came to fulfil. Moses and the prophets only laid the firm foundation on which to build, for God's revelation to them was not final, he sent his Son to rear thereon a superstructure, a higher and fuller revelation of his will. Jesus did not repeat the teaching of the law and the prophets. He did not tell his disciples that they must not kill; he took that law for granted and went farther, saying that they must not desire to kill. "It would have been a waste of his power to teach the alphabet of morals. He takes morality for granted and carves what Moses had hewn. His great discourse moves not in the sphere of duty but in the atmosphere of love."

To the Critic of the Church. We do not want your criticism of the Church, we want yourself. Why cannot you come into the Church with the freshness of your spirit, and the virility of your character, and the newness of your outlook, baptize the Church with a new spirit, give it a new outlook upon life? Let the Church be as bad as it can be, as bereft of the true spirit as it is possible for it to be, you will never make it any better by merely crying out against it. You must adopt the method and spirit of Jesus Christ, and must inspire it with a new faith and hope and more charity. Let your opposition be not a mere blank and negative thing. Let it be of that kind that can do good, that does not wither but can create new life. *David Graham,* in *Criticism and Construction.*

II Murder and Hatred

The Old Law and the New Life. The old law reads, Thou shalt not kill. Relatively few break this commandment directly. The new life forbids the breaking of the law in thought, it traces the sin back to its source and forbids the angry thought that leads to the angry word and sometimes to the angry deed of murder. The hand must not strike the murderous blow, says the old legislator; the thought that dwells on the possibility of striking the blow is equally guilty, says the new Legislator. Civic laws can legislate only against actions; civic rulers cannot condemn the man whose hands are innocent; but Christ legislates against feelings; the great Judge condemns him whose soul is black with uncommitted crimes. It is not what one does that is the measure of one's real character; it is what one would do if he were not afraid of being found out, were not mindful of the opinion of others, or were not deprived of the opportunity. It is not what one does but what one is at heart, not the outward deed but the inward life, not the action but the springs of action, that God judges. "'Tis not what man Does which exalts, but what man Would Do!" exclaims Browning, and equally true is it that, 'Tis not what man Does which debases, but what man Would Do! Further Browning tells us that the aim, if reached or not, makes great the life, and the thought comforts us: but we must not forget the complementary truth, that some unreached aims make mean the life, and the thought should warn us. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Indirect Ways of Killing. The mob lynches the red-handed slayer, when it ought to keep a gallows Haman-high for the venal mine inspector, the seller of infected milk, the maintainer of a fire-trap theater. The child-beater is forever blasted in reputation, but the exploiter of infant toil, or the concoctor of a soothing syrup for the drugging of babies stands a pillar of society.

The man who picks pockets with a railway rebate, murders with an adulterant instead of a bludgeon, burglarizes with a "rake-off" instead of a jimmy, cheats with a company prospectus instead of a deck of cards, or scuttles his town instead of his ship, does not feel on his brow the brand of malefactor. The shedder of blood, the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless, long ago became odious; but latter-day treacheries fly no skull-and-crossbones flag at the masthead.

How decent are the pale slayings of the quack, the adulterator, and the purveyor of polluted water, compared with the red slayings of the vulgar bandit or assassin! Even if there is blood-letting, the long-range, tentacular nature of modern homicide eliminates all personal collision. What an abyss between the knife-play of brawlers and the law-defying neglect to fence dangerous ma-

chinery in a mill, or to furnish cars with safety couplers! *J. M. E. Ross,* in *Sins of Society.*

Murderous Sins. Dr. Farrar has made this list of words representing the germ and substance of murderousness: anger, rage, fury, vindictiveness, revenge, strife, contentiousness, rivalry, sullenness, malice, malignity, rancor, unforgiving temper, spleen, unkindness, enmities, grudges, jealousies, faction, envy, spite, hatred, bitterness, misanthropy, detestation, execration, loathing. The list is very far from being complete. And how common the sins are! Must not all shudder at the thought that they are liable to the guilt of one of these "murderous sins," of being "all brothers, all Cains and Abels"! As Professor Henry Drummond reminds us, it is not in what each of these sins is that its significance lies so much as in what it reveals: it is the intermittent fever which tells of unintermittent disease; the occasional bubble escaping to the surface, betraying the rottenness underneath; a hastily prepared specimen of the hidden products of the soul. Every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.

In a Boston district court a young man from a fine family was found guilty of assault with intent to kill. As a boy he had yielded to every impulse of anger. "It was his infirmity," his parents said; "he couldn't help it." At one time so angry was he that he was "beside himself" and would have killed his brother had not another come to the rescue. The crime for which he was sentenced arose in a similar way. He became enraged because his uncle refused him something, and seizing a cane struck him until the old man fell senseless. We have heard much recently of "brain-storms" as an excuse for murder. The Sermon on the Mount affords no loophole for such an excuse.

A Boomerang. The morning's paper contains a report of a recent meeting of the American Philosophical Society where a distinguished physician showed that the mind is greatly impaired and brain cells are disintegrated through anger and hatred. These passions are always dangerous to the one who indulges in them. In his early life Beethoven, the great musician, had a furious and ungoverned temper. You know that he became deaf, but have you ever heard how this happened? Here is his explanation:

"I had to deal with a tiresome and capricious tenor. I had already written two great arias to the same words, neither of which pleased him, and also a third, which he did not care for the first time he tried it, but which he took away with him. I was thanking myself that I was rid of him and had settled down, when, in less than half an hour, I recognized his knock at the door. I sprang up from my table in such a rage that as the man came in at the door I flung myself on the floor. I fell on my hands and when I got up I found I was deaf. The doctors said afterwards I had permanently injured the nerves of my ears."

Almost a Miracle. Speaking of the school at Sitka a native of Alaska said: "Here at Sitka are 133 of the cleanest, happiest boys and girls to be found in all this great land of ours. Eskimos from the north, Aleuts from the west, Haidas from the south, Tinneh from the interior, Tsimsheans and Tl'ingits from the coasts are living together in most friendly fashion in our mission schools. And yet the grandparents and even the fathers and mothers of these children were bitter enemies. My grandmother taught me to hate the Sitka people, because members of our Stickine tribe had been massacred by them long ago. An insult was never forgotten. The mother taught her children the same wicked lessons. That is the reason why it seems almost a miracle that representatives of all these one-time enemies should live so lovingly together."

III Quarrelsomeness

Agree with thine Adversary quickly. On one occasion after the close of his sermon Mr. Moody was standing in the hallway and urging people to come to his after-meeting, when a man stepped up and spoke some very insulting words to him. Quick as a flash Mr. Moody thrust him off and sent him stumbling down the steps into the vestibule. The spectators said to themselves that a man with so hasty a temper as that could have no Christian influence with them. But Mr. Moody said at his second meeting: "Friends, before beginning to-night I want to confess that I yielded to my temper out in the hall, and if that man is present whom I thrust from me in anger, I want to ask his for-

giveness and God's. Let us pray." His humble apology and sweet spirit created a wonderful impression, and the meeting did not suffer from the incident.

Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou have paid the last Farthing. In an Austrian village there is a large gooseberry bush growing just on the boundary line between two farms. For several years each farmer had taken the gooseberries which hung over his side, but one year each thought the other was gettting more than his share. They quarrelled over the berries and the quarrel led to a lawsuit, followed by appeals to a higher court. The final decision was that each party was to have the right to pick the berries which grew on his side of the line, but neither might destroy the bush. The costs of four hundred and fifty krone were charged half to each farmer. The yearly yield of the bush is worth about one-half a krone and the judge told the quarrelling farmers to take good care of the bush, for with good luck, it would take them only eight hundred years to make the bush pay!

What the Hearers of Jesus may have thought. In one of our lessons of last year we saw how the trouble arose between the Jews and the Samaritans, and also how it terminated. Let your class recall this. In Christ's day the Jews had no dealings whatever with the Samaritans, so bitter had grown the hatred and to such length had led the quarrel that began a thousand years earlier. Must not Christ's hearers have thought of this bitter feud as they listened to his words about leaving a gift on the altar that there might be reconciliation with one's brother before participation in worship?

A Good Way of stopping a Quarrel. A game of marbles was being played under the windows of a home; and by the second story window, which was open because the day was balmy and bright, sat the mother of the children who were playing. As the game went on, the mother, sitting at the window, heard one boy say, "You cheated." The other boy said, "I didn't." "You did," was the reply. And then the mother came into the game! The advice was new to them. She said, "Sing it, children, sing it." And while they were yet looking a little queer, there poured out from the window a song: "Oh, Willie, you cheated! Oh, Willie, you cheated! Oh, Willie, you cheated! but I didn't cheat you." The quarrelling stopped. "Sing it, boys," she said again. They couldn't sing it. When they looked into each other's faces, they smiled; they looked ashamed and they felt ashamed, and they stopped quarrelling.

You know, girls and boys, there are some things we can't sing. There are some things that are not singable. When you are angry, you can't sing your anger. Just try some time to sing a threat and tell that other boy what you are going to do to him! You can't do it; and things which we can't sing are sometimes, perhaps most always, better not said. *Frank T. Bayley,* in *Little Ten-Minutes.*

A Prayer. In so far as enmity is due to any fault of mine, may I promptly humble myself, ask forgiveness, and do my best to make amends. May I count no humiliation or sacrifice too great a price to pay for the restoration of good-will wherever by any act of mine, whether of omission or commission, it has been forfeited. May I remember that I cannot be right with thee, so long as I am wrong towards any of thy children.

When others are at fault; when they hate me without cause; when they persist in wronging me; when they misrepresent as evil the good I try to do; while I defend my rights with firmness, may I be free from personal bitterness. May I never forget that my enemy is more than his wrong attitude towards me; may I remember that he is thy child, my brother; still has some good qualities, and is capable of more. Thus even when compelled to oppose him, may I in courtesy and kindness show myself a friend to his better self; and win or at least deserve the restoration of his esteem. *Dr. William DeWitt Hyde,* in *Abba Father.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The tint of the flower proceeds from the roots. *Emerson.*
It is he who is in the wrong who first gets angry. *Wm. Penn.*
Cantankerousness is worse than heterodoxy. *General Armstrong.*
There is nothing so undignified as anger. *Longfellow.*

"There's a time for work and a time for play,
A time for EVERYTHING GOOD each day;
But never a time in this short life
For quarrels and angry words and strife."

"In a hundred ells of contention there is not one of love."

He best keeps from anger who remembers that God is always looking upon him. *Plato.*

If you are not at one with all, it is a proof that you are not at one with God. *Evan Roberts.*

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 1 Jn. 315.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Have we, perhaps, been thinking that there is no harm in harboring an evil thought if we do not let it lead to action? The thought, the desire, is in the divine judgment the real thing, for God looks upon the heart and judges not as man judges.

We are not to be bound by the traditions of the past: traditions are not manacles to bind us, but harness for us to use in the forward movement. *Dr. Lyman Abbott.*

We need to remember that it takes two to make a quarrel.

He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law; if we keep our hearts full of loving kindness we can let our words take care of themselves.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

I Jesus comes to complete the Law, 17-26.
  1. Declares the importance of the Law, 17-19.
  2. Requires righteousness greater than that of the Pharisees, 20-26.
    a. The law against murder includes anger, the cause of murder, 21-22.
    b. Enmity not compatible with worship, 23-24.
    c. Result of enmity, 25-26.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jesus' attitude to the Old Testament.
2. Jesus' attitude to his own age.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Where in the Old Testament is the command repeated in verse 33 found? (See reference in your Bible.) 2. What light is thrown upon James 3.1 by Rom. 2.21, 23; 1 Tim. 1.7? 3. With verse 6 compare Mt. 15.18. 4. What verse in the first chapter of Genesis is recalled by verse 9? (26.) 5. From what does Psalm 34 say we are to keep our lips? 6. To what does Proverbs 15 say we should devote our lips? 7. Copy these verses in regard to the duty of bridling the tongue, and commit four of them to memory: Ps. 39.1; Prov. 4.24; 10.10, 19; 14.23; 15.4; 17.20; 18.6; Eccl. 3.7; 10.12; Mt. 5.22; 12.36; Eph. 4.29; 5.4; Col. 3.8; 4.6; 1 Thess. 5.11; Tit. 1.10; 2.8; 3.2; Jas. 1.26; 1 Pet. 3.10; Jude 16. 8. What is Matthew's arrangement? (Clipping, p. 28.) 9. What is its style? (Clipping, p. 28.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is an oath? 2. In what earlier lesson is God himself spoken of as making a solemn oath? (First lesson of the year.) 3. "They say" that girls make promises readily and break them as readily; is this true? Is it true that boys keep their promises better than do girls? 4. Which commandment does James emphasize? 5. What sins are boys and girls sometimes tempted to commit in their games? 6. Are there white and black lies? 7. Make as long a list as you can of the sins of which the tongue is capable. 8. Make another long list of the virtues in the power of the tongue. 9. Make an earnest effort during the week not to let your tongue be guilty of any offence.

Note Book and Memory Work. See page 17, Introduction. Commit to memory the entire lesson for next week.

LESSON VIII MAY 26

TRUTHFULNESS

Golden Text

Putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Eph. 4.25

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 5.33-37; Jas. 3.1-12; 5.12. Truthfulness. **T.** Ps. 12. True and False Speech. **W.** Col. 3.8-15. Putting on the True. **T.** Lev. 19.9-18. Right Dealing. **F.** Luke 6.39-45. Need of a Good Heart. **S.** Ps. 15. The Upright Described. **S.** Ps. 19.7-14. Truth a Mighty Force. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 5.33-37; James 3.1-12; 5.12 COMMIT vv 34-36

Mt. 5 33 Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: 34 but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; 35 nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil *one.*

Jas. 3 1 Be not many *of you* teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. 2 For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. 3 Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. 4 Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth. 5 So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: 8 but the tongue can no man tame; *it is* a restless evil, *it is* full of deadly poison. 9 Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God: 10 out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11 Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet *water* and bitter? 12 can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

5 2 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgment.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

33-37. *Again.* See verses 21 and 27.—*To them.* Notice the change from *by them,* AV.—*Thou shalt not forswear thyself.* Thou shalt not swear falsely, Lev. 19.12; Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thy vows, Num. 30.2, and Dt. 23.21.—*But I say unto you.* It was said by God, verse 33; I have authority to fulfil (verse 17) this law, to show its full meaning.—*Swear not at all.* This not only forbids oaths in conversation, but also in courts of justice. The time should come when each man's word would be as good as his oath: that time, however, had not come in Jesus' day, for at his trial he was put on oath, Mt. 26.63, nor has it come now.—*Neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God,*

The Jews regarded oaths in which the name of God was not used as not binding; Jesus teaches that God is to be seen in everything, and calling *heaven,* or *earth,* or *Jerusalem,* or *thy head* to witness is virtually calling God.—*By Jerusalem:* Or, *toward Jerusalem,* RVm.—*For thou canst not make one hair white or black.* Even swearing by your head calls God to witness, for every hair is his handiwork, not yours.—*But let your speech be.* Some ancient authorities read *But your speech shall be,* RVm.—*Yea, nay.* Your *yes* and *no* must carry weight in themselves.—*Of the evil one.* Or, *evil,* RVm. The evil of the common untruthfulness has made necessary something more than *yes* or *no* at court, the "whatsoever is more than these."

James 3.1-4. *Be not many of you teachers.* Compare Mt. 23.7, 8; Rom. 2.21; 1 Tim. 1.7.—*Knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.* The more thou knowest, and the better thou understandest, the more strictly shalt thou be judged, unless thy life be also the more holy, *Thomas à Kempis.*—*Heavier. Greater,* RVm.—*Stumble.* Err. Actions are steps in life's way; wrong actions are missteps that lead to stumbling.—*If any stumbleth not in word.* The commonest way in which we all stumble.—*Able to bridle the body also.* "This is the doctrine that self-control in one respect carries with it complete self-control—probably a half-truth" (*Cone*). "I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue" (*Cato*). The statement is illustrated in verses 3 and 4.

5-6. *Boasteth great things.* See Ps. 12.3, 4.—*How much wood.* Or, *how great a forest,* RVm.—*By how small a fire!* By a tiny spark.—*The tongue is a fire.* As coals are to hot embers, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to inflame strife, Prov. 26.21.—*The world of iniquity.*—The sum total of evil.—*The world...tongue.* Or, *that world of iniquity, the tongue, is among our members that which,* etc., RVm.—*Which defileth the whole body.* See Mt. 15.18. "It is so easy for a word-sin to end in a sin of action; because a sin to which we yield so far as to permit it to obtain control over the tongue, easily gains the mastery" (*Weiss*).—*Which defileth the whole body.* Guard thy speech before all things, for a man's ruin lies in his tongue, says an Egyptian papyrus of about four thousand B. C.—*The wheel of nature.* Or, *of birth,* RVm. "The present life of man is compared to a wheel which is put in motion at birth, and runs swiftly until death stops it. The tongue often sets the wheel on flame, which sometimes sets on fire the whole machine" (*Benson*).—*Is set on fire by hell.* Greek, *Gehenna,* RVm. It is interesting to note that our word *devil* comes from the Greek word διάβολος, which means *the slanderer.*

7.12. *Kind.* Greek, *nature,* RVm.—*By.* Or, *into* RVm.—*Mankind.* Greek, *the human nature,* RVm.—*Full of deadly poison.* See Ps. 140.3; Rom. 3.13.—*Therewith bless we the Lord and Father.* "And thereby profess that we are striving to be like him."—*Made after the likeness of God.* Gen. 1.26.—*These things ought not so to be.* There is no such inconsistency in Nature, as the next two verses declare.—*Neither can salt water yield sweet.* Nor should the tongue yield both bitter and sweet words.

5.12. *Above all things.* In verse 9 James warns against controversies with one another. Here he warns against using oaths in conversation, to strengthen assertions.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

7. *The tongue is full of deadly poison.* The story of the bees is thus described by Mr. F. A. Root in his work "Bee Culture";—"After a bee has stung you and torn itself away from the sting, you will notice, if you look closely, a bundle of muscle near by, partly enveloping the poison bag. Well, the curious part of it is that, for some considerable time after the sting has been detached from the body of the bee, these muscles will work with a kind of pumping motion, working the sting farther into the wound, as if they had a conscious existence and burned with a desire to wreak vengeance on the party attached." Words have a life of their own. Many a harsh word, many a vicious lie, many a scandal from a gossip's tongue has thus worked its "sting farther into the wound" and continued to ply its poison, even after its author has forgotten, and sometimes after the grave has closed over him. And like the bee's sting, the lie or the scandal cannot be drawn back after it has been flung at a fellow mortal. *Homiletic Review.*

10. *These things ought not so to be.* Ought not, that is, they are unnatural. That this is James' meaning is evident from the two illustrations which follow: Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig tree yield olives, or a vine figs? There is apparently in these metaphors little that affords an argument against slander; the motive which they suggest would appear to many far-fetched and of small cogency; but to one who looks on this world as a vast whole, and who has recognized the moral law as only a part of the great law of the universe, harmoniously blending with the whole, illustrations such as these are the most powerful of arguments. The truest definition of evil is that which represents it as something contrary to nature; evil is evil because it is unnatural; a vine which should bear olive berries, an eye to which blue seems yellow, would be diseased; an unnatural mother, an unnatural son, an unnatural act, are the strongest terms of condemnation. It is this view which Christianity gives of moral evil: the teaching of Christ was the recall of men to nature, not an infusion of something new into humanity. Christ came to call out all the principles and powers of human nature, to restore the natural equilibrium of all our faculties. Now the nature of men is to adore God and to love what is God-like in man. The office of the tongue is to bless. Slander is guilty because it contradicts this. *F. W. Robertson,* in *Sermons Preached at Brighton.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

James 3.1. *Be not many of you teachers.* In Palestine of the first century there was no lack of religious teaching. The scribe was a familiar figure in Galilee as well as in Judea; he was to be met everywhere, in the synagogue, in the market-place, in the houses of the rich. With him went a numerous following of attached scholars. The first business of the Rabbi was to "raise up many disciples," and the first care of the good Jew to "make to himself a master." It is not without a bitter reminiscence of the religious condition of Palestine that James of Jerusalem counsels the members of the Christian countries to which he writes. *H. B. Surti,* in *The Expositor.*

10. *Blessing and cursing.* In "A study in the Eastern Atmosphere of the New Testament," Dr. G. M. Mackie points out that the habit of blasphemy or of invoking divine punishment was general among all oriental people, and that orientals expected words of cursing as well as of blessing to be fulfilled. Thus when a visitor leaves an oriental home, his host's last words to him are, "Give peace," meaning that he desires his goodwill or blessing to be given to any friend of his who may be met on the way. Similarly, it is understood that a malediction or curse regarded as originating in righteous indignation and submitted to the will of the Judge of the whole earth will also be granted a suitable fulfilment.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

In the Sermon on the Mount as given in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus followed his interpretation of the sixth commandment with an interpretation and illustration of the seventh commandment, and then spoke about the old law in regard to the keeping of oaths, which is "fulfilled—filled full" by the new law, Swear not at all. Jesus is here speaking only about taking oaths as making statements more solemn or promises more binding, and saying that they should be unnecessary, for one's simple word should be sufficient. To his one lesson the Committee has added two kindred topics, James' word about the control of the tongue, from the third chapter of his Epistle, and his word about swearing, from the fifth chapter.

The Epistle of James is the most intensely practical book in the Bible. It contains a series of most rigorous warnings against vices and errors to which the Christians of his day were especially liable, couched at times in somewhat extravagant language. Extravagant seem the words of the 2d verse: If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man. But must he not be perfect who never utters an angry, unkind, or thoughtless word? Out of the heart the mouth speaketh.

For the Geographical Background see lesson IV. Assign paragraphs 54-57, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Bring to class a small box containing some sand and pebbles of various sizes, and two sieves, one coarse, the other fine. Then talk about what kind of words we ought to speak, as Mr. Frank T. Bayley does in "Little Ten-Minutes":—Here is a little heap of sand and pebbles. We will let it represent words, some good, some bad. See how they all want to get out of the box as I tip it—all of them together! That is just the way with our words, is it not? How shall we know which to let pass, and how shall we keep back the bad ones? I have a sieve (using the coarser one). As I put it over the box, you see it keeps back some of the pebbles. These big ones cannot get through. This is the sieve of truth. It asks every word that comes, "Are you a true word?" And none can pass that is not true. This is the first rule of speech: Every word must be true. But a good deal of the stuff in our sand-box got through. It has no difficulty in passing the sieve. Most of the words that wanted to come were true words. Here, now, is another sieve. We will see if they can pass this test (pouring the material on the finer sieve). Ah, here are a good many pebbles that will not go through! They could pass the first sieve, but not this one. This is the sieve of kindness. It asks of each word that comes, "Are you a kind word?" And not one can pass that is not kind. A good many words are true that are not kind, and it is cruel and wrong to speak them.

We have tested our little boxful with both the sieves. Here is the fine, soft sand that has run through them both. See how gently it falls in my hand! Such are the words that are both true and kind—good words, such as will do good, and not evil; words that God will bless. God wants us to be both true and kind. And not a word should we speak which cannot pass both the sieves.

Now briefly recall the truths you have taught in the last lessons. What kind of people did Jesus call Blessed? What did he then say made us happier, to have something or to be something? What did he say about the way we should treat others? What did he teach about anger? Next Jesus taught his disciples that they should always do just what they said they would do, when they said "Yes" it should always mean "Yes" and when they said "No" it should always mean "No," that they should always speak the truth so that everyone would know that whatever they said was always true. Tell the lesson Archie Roosevelt learned and the example of Livingstone, page 208. James, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, later taught that our words should be kind. True words and kind words, as we said in the beginning, are the only words we should ever speak.

Bring copies of the stanza on page 215 for each pupil to take home and commit. Call for it next week.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What was the evil which Jesus talked about in last week's lesson? Have you seen any one angry this week? When you play marbles or tennis or baseball, or any other game, sometimes somebody becomes angry and utters angry words. There are other sins sometimes shown in games, which are discussed in our lesson for to-day. Yesterday a game of tennis came to a sudden end because of just these sins. The one who was serving sent the ball very near the boundary of the court. His opponent falsely declared it "out," the server knew that it had struck the court and becoming angry called the other a liar, and then the other began to swear and the game stopped. Nineteen hundred years ago Jesus and one of the writers of the Epistles spoke against these very sins. This James was the brother, not of John, but of Jesus.

For Older Pupils. One day a little girl had to be a witness in court. Because she was so young, one of the lawyers asked her if she knew what an oath in court meant. "Yes, sir," said the girl. "What is it?" "It is a swear." "What do you mean by saying that it is a swear?" "Well, it is that I have to tell the truth." "If you don't tell the truth, what then?" "That would be a sin." "What is a sin?" "A bad mark from God." They were satisfied that

she knew what it means to speak the truth, and they believed all that she said in her testimony.

Speak only the truth. Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount that forms the first part of our lesson have not yet been put into practice to such an extent as to make oaths in court unnecessary.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Truthfulness

One's Word should be as Good as his Bond. In Old Testament times an oath was used to make men's vows and promises binding, as seen in Ex. 22.11; Dt. 6.13; Ps. 63.11, etc. It was declared wrong to make use of the name of God in an oath when speaking falsely, Lev. 19.12; Num. 30.2. In New Testament times the oath was used to excess, and the Pharisees had made the breaking of vows attested with oaths an easy matter. The Talmud declares: If a man makes a vow to abstain from food, Woe to him if he eateth, and, Woe to him if he does not eat! What then must he do? Let him go before "the sages" and they will absolve him from his vow.

Pharisaic casuistry is exposed by Jesus in Mt. 23.16-22, and also in our lesson from the Sermon on the Mount. The Jews thought that if they swore by the heaven or by the earth, or by Jerusalem, then the vow was less binding than if God's name were used: heaven is God's throne, the earth his footstool, Jerusalem his city, declares Jesus, and the purpose of all oaths is the same.

Jesus swept aside the oath entirely on the ground that one should always speak the truth. With the oath there were two standards of speech, for a promise attested by an oath was regarded as more binding than one without the oath. Members of the kingdom of heaven, Jesus taught, should always speak the truth, there should be no need of their ever using an oath, for "their word should be as good as their bond" as we say, their simple "Yes" and "No" as binding as if God's name were used in connection with it, thereby calling God to witness that they were speaking the truth.

Keeping Promises. One day when Mr. Roosevelt was President his private telephone rang. "Who is this?" a boy's voice questioned. "It is the President." "Is Archie there?" "He is not here, but I think he is somewhere about." "Well, he promised to come and play with me at two o'clock; and it is now three o'clock, and he has not come." "I will look the matter up at once," said the President, and turned to the home telephone. "Why have you not kept your engagement with your playmate?" he questioned, and Archie replied, "I forgot all about it." "Go to him at once and apologize," said his father, and then reminded him that not to keep an engagement is to be guilty of a species of falsehood, that he must charge his mind with his engagements so there should be no more danger of his forgetting them than of forgetting any other duties, that to play fast and loose with his promises now would undermine his whole character, that both honor and manliness required him to keep all his engagements or to make timely and satisfactory explanations.

What a grand instance of being true to one's word was that action of Livingstone at St. Paul de Loanda on the west coast of Africa! He had reached this place only after enduring the severest hardships, having faced death over and over, and he was terribly weakened by fever and bitterly disappointed at finding here no news from home. A ship was about to sail for England, and Livingstone was urged to return for the rest he so sorely needed. But he had given his word to his native helpers that he would return the way they went, and rather than break his promise to them he turned about and again faced all the dangers and difficulties of that dreadful journey.

Juggling with Truth. Captain Grove did give me a letter, directed to myself. I discerned money to be in it, and took it, knowing it to be the proceeds of the place I had got him. But I did not open it till I came home to my office, and there I broke it open, not looking into it till all the money was out, that I might say I saw no money in the paper if ever I should be questioned. There was a piece of gold and four pounds in silver. So home to dinner. *Samuel Pepys, Diary.*

Advice to Boys.

"Whatever you are, be brave, boys;
The liar's a coward and slave, boys.
Though clever at ruses
And sharp at excuses,
He's a sneak and pitiful knave, boys."

Advice to Young Men. In a recent conversation with a friend in business, he remarked that the places in the business world which are constantly in waiting for young men are those which demand the right handling of truth, truth in the form of facts. The man who can stand before a board of directors without confusion or without flinching in the assertion or proof of a fact is the man of an assured future. "I sometimes think," he said, "that one ought to have a training for business like the training for the pulpit." *Wm. Jewett Tucker, Personal Power.*

II Sins of the Tongue

Angry Words. You have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire. Mt. 5.21-22.

Unkind Words. Words are like that floating mine which drifted out to sea during the Russo-Japanese war and was forgotten till it struck the west coast of Japan and exploded, killing ten and wounding over a hundred and fifty; words may be forgotten, but their power to work ill is not destroyed and all unexpectedly they may work unintended havoc. Remember Will Carleton's warning:—

Careful with fire—is good advice we know:
Careful with words—is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead
But God himself can't kill them when they're said.

In a recent book Dr. Robert E. Speer has a pertinent illustration: I remember when I first reached China, taking a walk with a friend through the streets of a Chinese village, and seeing for the first time a Chinese dog open his mouth. I stopped and asked my friend, "What is the matter with that dog's mouth?" The inside was not red like the inside of our dogs' mouths, but blue, as though he had been eating berries. My friend said, "Why, there is nothing the matter. That is the color of the mouth of a Chinese dog." How many Christians are there who have the mouths of Chinese dogs, not red and clean as Christians' mouths ought to be: but stained and defiled with malicious speaking, unkindly and ungenerous talk, with all that kind of conversation which is death to Christian unity. Shall we not resolve that we will cease from this sin of unkindly, un-Christlike speech?

Slanderous Words.

You may keep your feet from slipping,
And your hands from evil deeds,
But to guard your tongue from tripping,
What unceasing care it needs!

Be you old, or be you young,
O, beware,
Take good care,
Of the tittle-tattle tell-tale tongue. *St. Nicholas.*

Sarcastic Words. There is a Greek word *sarkadsein* which means literally *to tear flesh like dogs.* The old Greek charioteer had a whip which tore away the horse's *sarx,* or flesh. So when men use their tongue as a lash, use biting words as dogs use teeth, we apply to them an English word derived from this old Greek word, and call them *sarcastic.*

Profane Words. See Third Topic.

Unspoken Words. We may bear false-witness by our silence as well as by our speech, we may hurt others by withholding the just word of praise as well as by uttering the unjust word of criticism, we may sin in not speaking the kind word of encouragement as well as in voicing the unkind word of discouragement. Verily he that stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man.

III Swear Not

A Coarse Sin of the Tongue. Taking God's name in vain is a habit of some who are thoughtless, of more who are weak, and of most who are coarse, vulgar or wicked. The third commandment was one of the first stepping-stones on the road upward to nobility of speech and character.

In nearly every Roman Catholic Church, there is a branch of the Confraternity of the Holy Name, or as it is sometimes called, the Confraternity against Oaths, a society that grew out of a decree of the Council of Lyons in 1274, intended to secure greater reverence for the name of God. The millions of members are not only pledged not to use profane language themselves but are urged to admonish all whom they may hear taking the name of God in vain. A splendid society, this.

A Scout Law. In the early records about life in Captain John Smith's colony in Virginia a cure for swearing was enforced. "Axes so oft blistered their tender fingers," we read, "that many times every third blow had a loud oath to drown the echo; for remedy of which sin, the President (Smith) devised how to have every man's oaths numbered and at night for every oath to have a can of water poured down his sleeve." This method was effective, for "Every offender was so washed that a man should scarce hear an oath in a week." This punishment invented by Capt. Smith is the one meted out now to Boy Scouts who break their eighth law, the one forbidding swearing.

George Washington's Opinion. Washington was once dining with several of his officers when one of them uttered an oath. He instantly dropped his knife and fork, and with characteristic dignity and earnestness, said, "I thought we all regarded ourselves as *gentlemen.*"

In a General Order issued by Washington in 1775 occur these words: The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing—a vice heretofore little known in an American army—is growing into fashion. He hopes that the officers will by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it; and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven upon our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is vice so mean and low, without temptation, that every man of sense and character detests it."

The Sin of Vulgarity. "Bishop," lightly asked one of a group of young golf-players as they came up with an elderly man taking his holes leisurely, "Bishop, when I make a bad drive and express my feelings with a word beginning with a large D, is it a sin?"

"Sin, Olive?" returned the bishop, as he poised his stick to play. "Sin? It's surely vulgar."

The girl's proud face flamed, and turning on her heel, she left her companions to make their own applications of the bishop's incisive reproof.

One of the saddest things about the too prevalent looseness of modern speech is its growing adoption by the more "bachelor" girls. A young woman recently used an expression that caused her twin brother to turn upon her in amazement and anger.

"I happened to overhear you say that the other day," she replied, bravely, though with burning face, and then she quoted Lanier's lines:

> "Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea,
> We maids would far, far whiter be
> If that our eyes might sometimes see
> Men maids in purity?"

"I shall never offend again," the young fellow replied gravely. "Thank you, Helen, nor can I ever forget that it was I who forced that word to your lips." *Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

A truthful man generally has all virtues. *Tennyson.*
A gentleman never swears. *Lord Chesterfield.*
We should be as careful of our words as of our actions. *Cicero.*
To many men, well-fitting doors are not set on their tongues. *Theognis.*

Set a watch, O Jehovah, before my mouth;
Keep the door of my lips. Ps. 141.3.

Remove far from me falsehood and lies. Prov. 30.8.
The tongue is the only edged tool that does not lose its sharpness with use. *Washington Irving.*

The Tongue,
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought! *Cowper.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Have you ever thought, like the small boy, that you wished there were a hospital for broken promises, a place where they might be made whole again? We are learning that prevention in medicine and in morals alike is better than cure. In the case of promises, the prevention is admirably told in the little child's definition of a promise: To promise, he said, is to keep it in mind, keep it in mind, keep it in mind till you do it.

Thy speech betrayeth thee, were the words Peter heard on that memorable night: our speech is constantly betraying us. Phillips Brooks is right in saying: Tell me what words a man uses most, and reproduce for me the tones in which he speaks them, and I ought to be able to tell you a good deal about what sort of man he is. What are your words telling your friends and acquaintances and the strangers whom you meet?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

Is a lie ever justifiable? See "The Soul Machine," *Harper's Weekly,* Dec. 19, '08, page 12.

A teacher's responsibility.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. When and why did Jesus once call the Pharisees "whited sepulchres"? (See Subject-Index of Bible.) 2. When and why did he once call them "wolves in sheep's clothing"? (Subject-Index.) 3. When and why did Jesus pronounce his seven-fold denunciation of the Pharisees, hypocrites? (Mt. 23.) 4. What example of Jesus shows that he did not disapprove of long-continued prayer? (Lk. 6.12.) 5. What parables show that he approved of persevering prayer? (Lk. 11.5-9; 18.1-8.) 6. Read 1 K. 18.26 and explain how it illustrates this lesson. 7. What remarkable instance of "vain repetition" is given in Acts? (Acts 19.34.) 8. With the petition about debts compare the parable of Mt. 18.21-35. 9. What do we know about the writer of the Second Gospel? (Clipping, p. 28.) 10. What was Mark's connection with Paul? With Peter? (Clipping, p. 28.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is a hypocrite? (Dictionary.) 2. Who were the hypocrites that Jesus had in mind? 3. Why was Jesus so tolerant of the weak and sinful, and so intolerant of the hypocritical? (Clipping, page 217.) 4. Since alms-giving, prayer, and fasting were acts of piety, why were the Pharisees condemned because they wanted others to see them perform these acts? 5. What is the meaning of "They have received their reward"? 6. What is the meaning of the figure of speech in verse 3? 7. For what does "the inner chamber" stand? 8. Since God knows what we need before we ask him (v. 8), why should we make known to him our wants? (Clipping, page 217.) 9. What is the meaning of "vain repetitions," v. 7? (Clipping, page 218.) 10. How may God's name be hallowed? 11. What duty have I to perform to-day because of the prayer I offered this morning?

Note Book and Memory Work. See page 17, Introduction. Commit to memory the entire lesson for next week.

LESSON IX JUNE 2

HYPOCRISY AND SINCERITY

Golden Text

Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. Mt. 6.1

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 6.1-18. Hypocrisy and Sincerity. **T.** 2 Cor. 9.6-15. Approved Giving. **W.** Acts 5.1-11. Awful End of Hypocrisy. **T.** Zech. 7.4-12. Insincere Fasting Reproved. **F.** Ps. 63. Prayer of Faith. **S.** Luke 11.1-13. Encouragement to Prayer. **S.** Luke 18.1-8. Persistence in Prayer. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 6.1-18 READ Luke 11.1-4 COMMIT vv 7, 8

Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them:
else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.
2 When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the
hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory
of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. 3 But when
thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 that
thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recom-
pense thee.
5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as hypocrites: for they love to stand
and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be
seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. 6 But
thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy
door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret
shall recompense thee. 7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gen-
tiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be
not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have
need of, before ye ask him. 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our
Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. 11 Give us this day our daily
bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil *one*. 14 For
if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive
your trespasses.
16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance:
for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I
say unto you, They have received their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest,
anoint thy head, and wash thy face; 18 that thou be not seen of men to fast,
but of thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall
recompense thee.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Righteousness.* The religious life expressed by good works in general. Almsgiving, prayer, and fasting were the good works of which the Pharisees especially boasted. *Almsgiving,* indeed, formed so large a part of the *righteousness* of the Jews that the two words were regarded as almost equivalent. The greater number of manuscripts have ἐλεημοσύνην, translated *alms* in our AV; δικαιοσύνην *righteousness,* is used in three manuscripts.—*To be seen of them.* πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι αὐτοῖς means literally *for the purpose of being gazed at.* The Greek word, θεαθῆναι is the verb from which our word *theater* is derived. Their

religion was theatrical.—*Your Father.* "In the Old Testament, God is seldom spoken of as a Father, and then in reference to the nation, not to the individual. In the Apocrypha individuals begin to speak of God as their Father but without showing what right they have to consider themselves sons rather than servants. Christ gave his disciples the right to become children of God." (*Plummer*).

2-3. *Sound not a trumpet before thee.* A figurative expression. Strive not to attract attention.—*The hypocrites.* The Greek work originally meant *actors on the stage.* In the New Testament it means *pretenders,* the scribes and Pharisees, as in 23.13.—*They have received their reward.* In the knowledge that their almsgiving has been seen of men.—*Let not...doeth.* A strong hyperbole, meaning that not only should they avoid ostentatious display of their charity, but they themselves should not keep it in constant remembrance.

5-6. *The hypocrites.* The Pharisees.—*They love to stand and pray.* Standing was the usual Jewish posture in prayer; the fault of the hypocrites was their desire to be in the synagogue or at the corners of the streets at the hour of prayer so that all might see them. See Light from Oriental Life.—6. See Isa. 26.20.—*Thine inner chamber.* This stands for any place where we are alone with God. For Nathanael it was under the fig-tree; for Peter it was on the housetop. Jesus does not disapprove of public prayer, but of that praying in public which is merely ostentatious.

7. *Use not vain repetitions.* Babble not much (*Tyndale*). The accent is upon the word *vain.* Compare the idle repetitions of the priests in their worship of Baal, 1 Kings 18.20, and of the Ephesians in their worship of Diana, Acts 19.34. "The word βαττολογήσητε is said in the Greek lexicon to be derived from the name of a king named Batta who stammered. Dr. Merx of Heidelberg has pointed out, after reading the Sinai text, that this is one of those hybrid words that arise in a country where two languages are spoken. The first half of it is Aramaic, and ought not to be *batta* but *battal*—a word which occurs also in Arabic, and means *rubbish.* The true meaning of this verse is, therefore, Do not rattle over your prayers without thinking of their meaning. It has nothing whatever to do with repetitions, and still less has it to do with stammering" (*Mrs. Lewis*).—*Heard for their much speaking.* Compare the rabbinical saying, "Prolix prayer prolongeth life."

8. *Your Father.* Some ancient authorities read *God your Father,* RVm.—*Knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.* We should pray, not so much to acquaint God with our needs, as to open our hearts to him as our Father. See the Third Topic.

9-13. See the Second Topic.

16-17. *When ye fast.* Jesus is speaking of private fasting. The strict Jews, like the Pharisee in the Parable of the Pharisee and Publican, fasted twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays.—*They disfigure their faces.* "A faster did not wash, or bathe or anoint the body, or shave the head, or wear sandals, but placed ashes on his head, thereby disfiguring his face. It was said of a certain Rabbi Joshua that all the days of his life his face was black by reason of his fastings" (*Dummelow*).—*Anoint thy head.* This was a common practice; they were to observe the usual customs and not ostentatiously make known that they were fasting.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *That thine alms may be in secret.* The public side of virtue must be balanced and kept in its right place by the private side. If a man's prayers in public are more numerous than his private devotions, he is in a bad way; but, if his testimony in public is accompanied with a hidden life of intercourse with God, it is likely to be salutary for all concerned. If a man never gives to the poor or to the cause of Christ except when his name is to appear in the newspapers or in a subscription-list; he is no better than the hypocrites of the time of our Lord; but, if a man's public charity be only the expression of a spirit of compassion and helpfulness, which he carries with him wherever he goes, then his example may fairly be allowed to be an encouragement to others, and he may even without danger enjoy the gratitude called forth by his generosity. *James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

7. *They think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.* I shall carry to my grave gratitude to D. L. Moody, who led me to stay and listen to his message by calling on his audience to sing a hymn while a long-winded brother should finish his prayer, the duration of which was actually at that moment driving me out of the building. In short, it seems to me that the more keenly I want a thing the briefer my form of petition, and the more directly I come to the point. *Wilfred T. Grenfell,* in *A Man's Helpers.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *When therefore thou doest alms.* In a Jewish community alms were given publicly in three ways. (1) Every day three men went round with a basket collecting alms for "the poor of the world," *i. e.* Jews and Gentiles alike. (2) Two synagogue officials went from house to house collecting alms for "the poor man's chest." This was for Jews alone. (3) On the Sabbath day alms were collected in the synagogue itself. The abuse which our Lord here attacks is probably that of the publishing the amounts given, which would naturally lead to ostentatious rivalry. *One Volume Commentary.*

The Jews held almsgiving in the highest estimation. The Talmud says that almsgiving is "more excellent than all offerings," is "equal to the whole law," will "deliver from the condemnation of hell," and makes a man "perfectly righteous." Maimonides particularizes eight degrees of almsgiving, the merit being graded according to the circumstance. In like manner the Roman Catholics attach great value to gifts and other kindnesses to the poor, believing that they atone for sins. *John A. Broadus,* in *Commentary on Matthew.*

2. *Sound not a trumpet before thee.* The people of Burma make pilgrimages to famous shrines and, after prostrating themselves repeatedly before them and mumbling prayers, they go to a bell hung near by and strike it with a piece of wood, so as to call the attention of gods and men to the fact that they have been praying!

2. *They have received their reward.* The Greek word is ἀπέχω, I have received in full, I have got. In countless instances we find the word on the papyri and ostraca as a technical expression regularly employed in drawing up a receipt. I think we may say that this technical meaning applies well to the stern text about the hypocrites, "they have received their reward in full," *i. e.* it is as though they had already been given a receipt, and they have absolutely no further claim to a reward. This added touch of quiet irony makes the text more life-like and pointed. *Adolf Deissmann,* in *Light from Ancient East.*

3. *Let not thy left hand know.* The best Jewish thought strongly approved of alms done in secret. In the temple was "the treasury of the silent" for the support of poor children, to which religious men brought their alms in silence and privacy, and it was strikingly said that "he that doeth alms in secret is greater than our master Moses himself." *One Volume Commentary.*

5. *They love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets.* Standing was the customary position in prayer. "During the synagogue services those who wished to be thought devout did not follow the public prayers, but said private—self-righteous—prayers of their own, loud enough to be heard and to attract the attention of the congregation. In the streets the same people would sometimes stand for three hours at a time in the attitude of prayer. The prayers of the phylacteries were required to be said at a fixed time with great parade and ceremony. When the time came, the workman put down his tools, the rider descended from his ass, the teacher suspended his lecture, to say them. The ostentatious were careful to be overtaken by the prayer-hour in a public place and to remain longer praying than anyone else."

It is interesting to recall that at the present day there are what are termed "professional worshippers" in the synagogues in the West End of London, if not elsewhere. Jewish law commands that services cannot be held without a *minyan,* a quorum of ten males over thirteen, and therefore a few poor men are paid a small weekly salary to be present in the synagogue every morning.

7. *Use not vain repetitions.* The Dean of Anatolia College, Turkey, writes of having a visit from a dervish who wore a string of five hundred wooden beads around his neck and explained that in worship they repeat the phrase "there is no God but God" five hundred times, the word "Allah" five hundred

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JESUS TEACHING HIS DISCIPLES

times, and the syllable "Hou"—for which he could give no explanation—five hundred times.

The Buddhists of Thibet believe that the repetition of their mystical formula, *Om mani pad-me hum!* will shorten their misery in some future stage of their existence, and in that land it is heard "early and late, indoors and outdoors, a universal litany." The words are written on rolls of paper and put in cylinders which are then turned, and the revolving of these prayer-wheels is rightly considered as efficacious as the spoken utterance of their vain repetitions!

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus' words about oaths are followed by words about retaliation and love of enemies, in which he tells the citizens of his new kingdom that their righteousness must be greater than that of publicans, who love only those who love them, and of Gentiles, who salute only their brethren. They are to be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect. Very naturally then follow his words about three specific forms of righteousness—almsgiving or charity, prayer, and fasting or self-denial—wherein their righteousness must exceed that of the hypocrites who give alms or pray or fast so as to be seen of men. In connection with his words about prayer is given his "Model Prayer," for it is Matthew's custom to group Jesus' words topically. The Prayer is given by Luke in briefer form and at a later time. "And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples," and in answer Jesus gave them this set form of words. In the "One Volume Commentary" it is noted that every Jew was required to recite daily eighteen set prayers of considerable length, or, if hindered by press of business, a summary of them, that the rabbis also taught their pupils an additional form of prayer composed by themselves, to be added to these eighteen prayers, and that our Lord's disciples would therefore understand that they were to recite this Prayer every day at the end of their ordinary prayers. "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," which dates probably from the first century A. D., directs the Prayer to be said three times a day by all Christians. So jealously was its secrecy guarded in early times that, like the Creed, it was only taught to catechumens just before their baptism, and was never used in those portions of public worship to which the heathen were admitted.

For the geographical setting see Lesson IV. Assign paragraphs 48-58, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Confine your lesson to the Lord's Prayer, verses 9-14. Show Tissot's picture No. 62. Study thoughtfully the third topic, once to gain for yourself a greater grasp of the depth and riches of this wonderful prayer, and again to note what part you will adapt for your pupils. Begin the lesson period with questions about the children's prayer—Now I lay me. Say that one of the presidents of the United States (John Quincy Adams) never went to sleep at night until he had said that prayer which he learned when a little child. In your talk about the Lord's Prayer explain the two divisions. A little child should early learn that a prayer must not be selfish. An English writer tells this beautiful incident: A five-year-old girl was saying her evening prayer; she asked God to bless her father, mother, sister, pussy, and the tame white mouse and then she paused, perplexed, but in a moment her face beamed with joy as she added, "And please take care of yourself, God." She somehow felt that her prayer had been selfish, and this "Take care of yourself, God" was her sweet way of saying she did not want all things only for herself, while God was not remembered. Let your pupils see that in her way she was asking for what Jesus taught we should ask in the words, "Hallowed be thy name." Dwell upon the invocation "Our Father," teaching that prayer is talking with our heavenly Father. Dr. MacColl's thoughts, page 218, can be made clear to your pupils. Call for this petition (Dr. J. W. Chapman's)

Help me
To know that he is with me every day,
And be quite sure he hears me when I pray.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What is a hypocrite? The Greek word from which it comes meant, as the Greeks used it, one who played a part on the stage. A player or actor takes the part of some one, pretends to be for the time being some one else. So a hypocrite is a pretender: he says or does things to make others think he is different from what he is, or better than he is. At Delhi in India there is an iron pillar which looks so massive and strong that the Hindus have said it must go down to the very center of the earth. But one day the English began to dig around its base and they found that it extended only twenty inches, less than two feet, below the surface! If that pillar had tried to make the Hindus believe as they did, we should call it a hypocrite.

The great hypocrites in the time of Jesus were the Pharisees. Jesus himself called them hypocrites. In what three ways did they show their insincerity? In his teaching about the sixth commandment Jesus taught that guilt lay not alone in the deed: in what did he say it lay? The wrong spirit that might or might not lead to the wrong deed was blameworthy as well as the wrong deed. The spirit of the Pharisees was wholly wrong. Why did they give alms? Offer prayer? Fast?

For Older Pupils. In our first lesson from the Sermon on the Mount we studied the Beatitudes and with them Jesus' words to his disciples about their position and influence in the world. What did he tell them they should do with their light? Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. And now in to-day's lesson from the same sermon what does he practically say they should do with their light? In telling them to give their alms and pray and fast in secret, does he not say, Hide your light from men that they may not see your good works? How shall we reconcile the two statements? What is the last clause in his direction about letting their light shine? And glorify your Father who is in heaven. The purpose of letting their works be seen by men was that they might lead them to glorify God who gave them the will and the power to do their good works: it was not that others might glorify them. When the Pharisees let their good works be seen of men, what was their purpose? They sought solely to glorify themselves, their purpose was wholly wrong. With self-glorification Jesus had no patience: his disciples must do no good works with this purpose in view, they must rather hide their light and do their good works in secret, seeking God's approval, not men's. There is a public and a private side of virtue. He who is virtuous in private may give himself little concern about his good influence in public, his light cannot help shining, but he who is virtuous only in public is only a hypocrite, and hypocrites Jesus despised.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Hypocrisy

A Definition of Hypocrisy. A native of Madagascar gave William Ellis, the noted missionary, a definition of hypocrisy which showed he thoroughly understood the meaning of the word. Mr. Ellis was translating the Bible into the Malagasy language and could find no word to express this. He explained the idea to the people and asked them what word could be used. "I know, I know," said this native, "it is to put a clean mat over a dirty floor."

The Hypocritical Pharisee. Many years ago what was supposed to be a diamond was found in Brazil. It was a very brilliant stone weighing nearly a pound and was valued at millions of dollars. The emperor to whom it was given kept a number of soldiers constantly guarding it. One day an English mineralogist was allowed to handle the stone, and he tested its genuineness with a cutting diamond. One stroke produced a scratch, and in that scratch the millions vanished, for had the stone been a genuine diamond no scratch would have appeared. The Pharisees considered themselves, and were so considered by the people, of greater worth than ordinary mortals. They loved to stand at the corners of the street and pray, they gave alms, they fasted, they rigorously kept the Sabbath, they were pre-eminently pious men. But they were hypocrites, actors in a religious play, for they were but playing a well-calculated part, their religion was a thing of outward show, not inward feeling;

they gave alms, not because they loved the poor but because they would be seen giving alms; they prayed in public places, not because they felt the need of communion with God, but because they would be known for piety. They never deceived Jesus and unsparing was he in his denunciation of such motives.

Christ's Intolerance with Unreality. Bishop Phillips Brooks thus explains why Jesus was so patient with imperfection and so intolerant of unreality: You need to learn, when you hear Christ your Master insisting on repentance, on love for himself, on love for fellow-man, on devoted work, that his desire is, first of all and deepest of all, for the qualities of those things. He wants a real repentance, a real love, a real devotion. If he sees reality, we can well understand how he can be infinitely patient with littleness; for where he stands eternity is all in sight. He sees forever. He knows through what summer of cloudless sunshine the least grace will have time to ripen to the richest.

How impressive this is in the story of Christ's earthly life! He could wait for a publican while he unsnarled himself out of the meshes of his low vocation, but he cut with a word like a sword through the solemn trifling of the Pharisees. He never was impatient with his disciples. Their graces were very small, but they were real. Eternity was long, and he could wait till the graces which he saw to be real opened into all the possibility which he discerned in them; till the Peter who paraded his genuine but feeble resolution of devotion at the Supper grew to the Peter who could die for him at Rome, and live with him in some high doing of his will in heaven.

Take Heed. Do we perhaps think that we do not sound a trumpet before us when we give alms, nor do we love to pray on the corners of the streets to be seen of men? Do we not? Take heed.

Says quaint old Thomas Fuller: "I have observed some at the church door cast in sixpence with such ostentation that it rebounded from the bottom and rang against both sides of the bason, so that the same piece of silver was the alms and the giver's trumpet." An editorial in *The Christian,* an English paper, says: We attended church one day with a gentleman who found that the only coins his pockets contained were a threepenny-piece and a sovereign. Anticipating the collection-bag, he held the former coin ready to give. To his dismay he saw the near approach of a *plate,* and hastily substituted the sovereign, but not exactly in the spirit of *"a cheerful giver"!* Take heed.

When one morning Mr. Moody asked two young men where they had been and one of them replied, "To an all-night prayer-meeting; don't you see how our faces shine?" he quietly remarked, "Moses wist not that his face shone," and thus they learned that they were in danger of the sin of standing and praying in the corners of the streets that they might be seen of men. Take heed!

Hypocrisy is always the Pretence of Other People, not Our Own. Witness this little dialogue, told in the Youth's Companion.

"I despise a hypocrite," says Boggs.

"So do I," says Cloggs. "Now take Knoggs, for example; he's the biggest hypocrite on earth. I despise that man."

"But you appear to be his best friend."

"Oh yes; I try to appear friendly toward him. It pays better in the end."

II Why Pray?

Your Father knoweth what Things we have Need of, before ye ask him. The best answer I know to the question, Why pray? the answer which never fails to satisfy the man who has made it his own, is this: Prayer is not simply the recognition of law; prayer is the recognition of love, the love that is in all law, the love that is in all life. The secret of all true prayer, the unfailing rule for its exercise and interpretation, was given by Jesus when he said, "When ye pray, say our Father," We fathers know what is good for our children much better than they do, why should they presume to tell us? A sad day it would be for all of us when our children ceased to come running to us with their childish wants and troubles, which are often so very foolish, for their coming is the expression of the love which is our very life, and of the trust which is our joy. And so, when the cannibal chief, of whom James Chalmers tells us, prays "We much want tobacco, calico, and tomahawks and

knives," I am sure it pleases God even as it pleases us, for it is the foolish child coming to his wise Father, and by and by, coming often to that Father, he will know better what to ask. And when the child of whom Dr. George A. Coe tells us, seeing a storm coming that will stop his play, kneels upon the lawn and prays that it may not rain, it is prayer, for it is the child coming to his Father, the child making the truly Christian assumption that God is interested in the games of childhood.

I must come to God with my poor little human prayers because he is my Father and I am his child, and if I do not speak to him, nor he to me, the sweet relation is lost. He is no more my Father, nor I his child. And I may ask him for anything I like, because he is my Father, but coming to him often I learn, as our children soon learn with us, that there are many things it is useless to ask, that the things best for me are the things my loving Father longs to give; that the best prayer is prayer that I may know what these are, and desire them above all, and love and trust him more and more. For the best prayer is not asking for things, it is the quiet, creative hour when the child is alone with his Father seeking his guidance, receiving his strength, resting in his infinite love. Condensed from *A Working Theology,* by *Alexander MacColl.*

The Motive of Jesus' Prayers. We need prayer very much and use it very little. We are prone to think he needed it very little and used it very much. But surely here again we are mistaken. Remember the tendency of life, the tendency of even the best life to run down. Nobody knew this as well as Jesus did. See what he said about it. See chiefly what he did about it. He did not pray just to set an example. He lived the life of prayer because for him it was worth living. It kept the channels of life open, the tides of real power flowing, for him as it would for us. He becomes an example because of the reality of his practice. There was nothing artificial about it. It was not sham praying or display praying. He did not pray in order that or because men might see him and be impressed and stimulated to do likewise. He prayed because he felt the need of it and knew the value of it. He did not mean to have any low moments. He purposed to keep life persistently at its highest levels. *William Fraser McDowell,* in *The School of Christ.*

One who knew the Use of Prayer. The pastor who spent a holiday with Horace Bushnell, camping out at night under the open sky, discovered the secret of the latter's power and the reason why every one should pray. The first night Dr. Bushnell said, "One of us ought to pray here before we sleep," and then beginning with the text, Lord, I have remembered all the way by which thou hast led me, Dr. Bushnell poured out his heart in such supplications that his hearer says, "I was afraid to stretch out my hand in the darkness for fear I should have touched God."

III The Model Prayer

Its Outline. The prayer naturally divides into two parts: first, the things of God: second, the things of man. Foremost in the mind of Jesus were always the things of God, and foremost would he have them in the minds of his disciples, therefore the first three petitions put God first, they are all concerned with his honor and glory, they refer to him, his kingdom, his will. The last three petitions put ourselves first, and refer to our needs, debts, temptations.

Our Father. The pronoun *our* proclaims our brotherhood one with another as well as God's Fatherhood to all. The reading book used in a boys' school at Damascus conducted by Moslems has a version of the Lord's Prayer which begins "Our God, thy name is hallowed." To the Moslem, God is a far-off God, and to think of him as Father would be to dishonor him. To the Christian, God is Spirit but he is also Father, for Jesus has taught us to give him this most sacred of human names, and to think of him in this most beautiful of human relationships. He himself always addresses God as Father.

Who art in heaven. God is everywhere, but the Scriptures speak of heaven as his special abode. Beautiful is Ralph Connor's wish: To live with my windows open toward Heaven: to listen to Heaven's music, and to look for Heaven's light: to catch a breath of Heaven's air and to delight in his companionship who is Heaven's glory and Heaven's Lord; and to count it honor to be granted some small part in the bringing in of Heaven's Kingdom.

Hallowed be thy name. God's name stands for God himself, his revealed Nature. *Hallowed* means *treated as holy,* reverenced, rightly worshipped. The prayer is for "grace to honor the new name of Father by thought and life." There are many ways in which we may fail to hallow God's name. Swearing is profaning God. Irreverent worship is profaning him. Harboring unworthy ideas of his Nature, thinking him cruel, unkind, is profaning him. We treat God with irreverence by banishing him from our thoughts, says Ruskin, by not referring to his will on slight occasions: there is nothing so small that we may not honor God by asking his guidance of it. Deeds profane the name of God more than any words can do, says a recent writer on socialism: Until we make our actions Christian in deed and Christian in reality and not merely in sentiment, we have not hallowed God's name.

Thy kingdom come. Let thy sovereignty be realized: it will be realized when the words of the next petition become true.

Empires, temples, sceptres, thrones,—
May they all for God be won!
And, in every human heart,
Father, let thy kingdom come. *John Page Hopps.*

Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth. This is a prayer that our wills may conform to his: it is a prayer of consecration, not of resignation. Augustine amplifies the thought: O Lord, grant that I may never seek to bind the straight to the crooked, that is, thy will to mine; but that I may ever bind the crooked to the straight, that is, my will to thine; that thy will may be done and thy kingdom come.

Give us this day our daily bread. Note that we ask for a supply sufficient for this day's need, the petition precludes anxious thought for the morrow—and that we ask also for a supply for our brother's need—it implies that we will help supply that need. Dr. Charles F. Aked observes: This petition comes between the deepest prayer of faith and the deepest prayer of penitence. When the significance of this is fully grasped, one of two things will happen. Either, like Erasmus, we shall say that such a mundane petition is out of place in this so heavenly prayer, or else we shall realize as we never have done before God's interest in us. This is the God who cares for the sparrows, O ye of little faith. We are to speak to him of our daily needs, and he will listen to his children's cry.

"I thank Thee, Lord, for strength of arm
To win my bread,
And that beyond my need is meat
For friend unfed.
I thank thee much for bread to live;
I thank thee more for bread to give."

And forgive us our debts. Debts here mean sins: a debt not paid to God is a sin. "When we sin there is something in our act for which we become *liable* to God. Formerly he had a claim upon us; now he has a claim against us."

"At vesper tide,
One virtuous and pure in heart did pray,
Since none I wronged in deed or word to-day,
From whom should I crave pardon?
Master, say."

A voice replied:

"From the sad child whose joy thou hast not planned;
The goaded beast whose friend thou didst not stand;
The rose that died for water from thy hand!"

As we also have forgiven our debtors. Must God wait to be good until we are good? Is our grace the measure of his own? No; but until we have the spirit which forgives we have not the spirit which can be forgiven. If it were possible for us to receive love from God and give out hate to men; if we could be joyous towards him and sullen to our neighbors; if we could ac-

cept from him sunshine, tenderness, and love while we continued to walk in annoyance, hostility, and deep disdain of our fellow men, it would be because we lived in a world whose order was immoral and corrupting. Nothing of the kind is possible. The only spirit which can be forgiven is the spirit which forgives.

And bring us not into temptation. The Authorized Version has *lead* instead of *bring; bring* is the right word, for God does not lead us into temptation, he permits us to be brought into temptation. And temptation has here its earlier meaning of a testing, a trial, as the root word still has in our word attempt. The thought is that God has so ordered this world that we are brought into circumstances which try our characters, put us to the test. Jesus followed his Beatitude concerning the persecuted with these words: Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake. And James writes, Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold trials. Why, then, are we taught to pray to be spared these trials, these times of testing? Because, as Dr. Aked points out, it is the cry of conscious weakness. "'The Lord's Prayer,' says a Scotch divine 'is not merely for heroes, but for the timid, the inexperienced. The Teacher is considerate and allows time for reaching the heights of heroism on which St. James stood when he wrote, 'Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold trials.' The prayer interpreted, paraphrased—it is as though we should cry: Our Father, we count not ourselves amongst the great and heroic of thy children. We dread the fiery trial. We doubt our power of resistance. Let us not be tried beyond our strength to withstand. Bring us not into the storm of conflict that may overwhelm us nor the fiery trial which may destroy our faith."

But deliver us from the evil one. The Authorized Version reads *evil,* not *evil one.* Better than either translation, is *the evil,* for the definite article is used in the Greek original. The words τοῦ πονηροῦ in Greek may be either masculine or neuter, and therefore may be translated either *the evil one* (masculine) or *the evil,* neuter. Orientals think of evil as personified, hence the Revisers have preferred "the evil one;" and we naturally think of evil in the abstract, "the evil."

For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. *Amen.* This doxology is an appropriate conclusion to the prayer, a repetition at the end of the thought of the beginning; it has been made sacred by long usage, and therefore may well be still used. It is rightly omitted, however, from the Revised Version because it is not found in the most authoritative manuscripts, and was not known to the earliest Christian writers. It was evidently incorporated with the prayer in public worship and then first written on the margin of some manuscript, whence it was taken over into the text by a later copyist.

SENTENCE SERMONS

I knew that thou hearest me always. John 11.42.

Work for God leads to knowing the will of God. *Ram's Horn.*

I have no faith in prayer when we are not doing our share. *W. T. Grenfell.*

True goodness is like the glow-worm in this that it shines most when no eyes except those of heaven are upon it. *Hare.*

In the deed that no man knoweth,
Where no praiseful trumpet bloweth,
Where he may not reap who soweth—
There, Lord, let my heart serve thee. *Unidentified.*

Fervent lips and a wicked heart are like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross. Prov. 26.23

By thy unsparing denunciation of pretence, create in me a hatred of all sham, all insincerity. *Hester Alway.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

It is not piety but self-righteousness that is wrong. As some one has remarked, what makes the rooster unpopular is not his getting up early in the

morning—which is an excellent habit—but his continual crowing about it. What was wrong with the Pharisee was not his almsgiving and praying and fasting, but his ostentatious way, his self-righteous spirit. There is always peril lest we fall into this same grievous fault. We should seek God's approval, not man's, in all we do. Jesus would have us of that company of whom Lowell speaks—

> The bravely dumb who did their deed,
> And scorned to blot it with a name;
> Men of the plain, heroic breed,
> Who loved Heaven's silence more than fame.

How appalling is the thought that if Jesus felt the need of prayer, as we know he did, what must our need be!

Our Prayer: My Father, do thou who knowest what I need before I ask thee, guide and direct my petitions. May thy Kingdom come within me, and may this day in its opportunities be used in the service of thy Kingdom. While I ask for my daily needs, may I not fail to do what I can for the needs of others. Not as a vain repetition, not with the lips only, but in that true worship which is in spirit and truth, I offer the prayer taught by thy Son Jesus Christ: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

Hypocrisy. See The Age of Pretence by Basil Toze in the *Monthly Review*, Aug. '06. Consider the claim that the Church is "a hollow mockery," as represented in "The Servant in the House."

With heroic service let us do our share to make it possible that God's will shall be done throughout this earth. Do you believe, questions Dr. Aked, that it is God's will that men should drink themselves drunk, be riotous, murderous, and abominable? Do you believe it is God's will that Southern mobs should pour coal oil over a writhing fellow creature, white or black, and roast him at the stake? Do you believe it is God's will that, as declared by an American judge, corruption should be found ingrained in American public life and one hundred and forty per cent of municipal expenditure should be "graft"? Do you believe it is God's will that the government of American cities should be, in President Eliot's words, the worst in the world?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What two lessons have we already had from Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount, and what is the theme of each? 2. What three from Matthew's, and their themes? 3. Which two verses of this lesson are not found in Matthew's version? (39, 40.) 4. In what connection is the saying of v. 39 given by Matthew? (Mt. 15.14.) 5. That of verse 40? (Mt. 10.24.) 6. Where in John is the saying of verse 40 twice given? (Jn. 13.16; 15.20.) 7. In Matthew's Gospel what is said to have been the effect of the Sermon on the Mount? (Mt. 7.28-29.) 8. When and for whom was the Second Gospel written? (Clipping, p. 29.) 9. What is its aim? (Clipping, p. 29.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is the meaning of verse 40? (Clipping, p. 222.) 2. What does the word *mote* mean? 3. What do the mote and the beam illustrate? 4. What does the parable of the two foundations teach? 5. How can you tell whether you are a Christian or not? 6. What does Jesus require of those who claim to be his followers? 7. Is it possible for one to deceive himself and think himself a Christian because he calls Jesus Lord, although he is not striving to do his will? 8. What bearing has this lesson upon the theme of last week's lesson? 9. We know from Mt. 7.28 what impression the Sermon on the Mount made upon his hearers: what impression has it made upon you?

Note Book and Memory Work. Write an analysis of the sermon in Luke, 6.20-49. Commit to memory all of the next lesson.

LESSON X—JUNE 9

HEARING AND DOING

Golden Text

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. James 1.22

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 6.39-49. Hearing and Doing. **T.** Matt. 5.17-26. Profession and Practice. **W.** Jas. 2.14-26. Faith and Works. **T.** Acts 8.26-38. Noteworthy Example of Hearing. **F.** 1 Thess. 2. 1-12. Noteworthy Example of Doing. **S.** Matt. 13.18-23. Fruitful and Fruitless Hearers. **S.** Ps. 119.49-60. The Word and Obedience. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 6.39-49 READ Matt. 7; James 1.22-27 COMMIT vv 47-49

39 And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind? shall
they not both fall into a pit? 40 The disciple is not above his teacher: but every
one when he is perfected shall be as his teacher. 41 And why beholdest thou
the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in
thine own eye? 42 Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me cast
out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam
that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine
own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy
brother's eye. 43 For there is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt fruit;
nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth forth good fruit. 44 For each tree is
known by its own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a
bramble bush gather they grapes. 45 The good man out of the good treasure
of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil *man* out of the
evil *treasure* bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the
heart his mouth speaketh.
46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47
Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will
show you to whom he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who digged
and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose,
the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it: because it had
been well builded. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that
built a house upon the earth without a foundation; against which the stream
brake, and straightway it fell in; and the ruin of that house was great.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

39. *Can the blind guide the blind?* He who judges another for the fault that is in himself, verse 41, is like a blind person who is leading another blind one, verse 42.—*Shall they not both fall into a pit?* In Mt. 15.14, Jesus applies this saying to the Pharisees. There were numerous pits—open wells and unguarded quarries—in the land.

40. The disciple of a blind spiritual guide will be just as spiritually blind as his teacher.

41. *Mote.* The Greek word κάρφος means any small dry body, especially a dry stalk or twig. Straw, chip, chaff, dust, have been suggested as suitable translations to express the thought of a relatively small fault.—*Beam.* The beam in the roof of a house: hyperbole has always been common in the East.

42. *Hypocrite.* He who will not heed the beam in his own eye is a deceiver, not self-deceived.—*When thou beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye.* While you see your own faults with eyes bleared and unanointed, why is it that in the faults of your friends, your vision is sharp as an eagle's? (*Horace.*)

43. *For there is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt fruit.* If we condemn others when we are worse than they, we are like bad trees pretending to bear good fruit (*Bengel.*) *Nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth forth good fruit.* By no alchemy can we get golden conduct out of leaden motives (*Spencer*).

46. *Lord, Lord.* They were ready to show respect by their words, but not by their works.

48. *The stream.* The channels of the streams of Palestine are usually dry in summer, but in winter the water rushes through them in torrents.—*Because it had been well builded.* Many ancient authorities read *for it had been founded upon the rock,* as in Mt. 7.25, RVm. In the application of the parable, that character is well builded that is founded on Christ's teachings, 1 Cor. 10.4: he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

49. *Heareth.* Greek *heard,* RVm.—*Doeth not.* Greek, *did not,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

41. *Considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.*

He can wel in myn eye see a stalke
But in his owne he can nought seen a balke. *Chaucer.*

45. *Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.* The malice or passion that rings in the words lay first in the heart. The words are inevitably a specimen of the man. They are the creation of his inmost spirit, and the quality of that unseen spirit may be more approximately measured by the audible words in which it habitually utters itself. *John Edgar McFayden,* in *The City of Foundations.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

41. *The beam that is in thine own eye.* This was a common proverb characteristically oriental in its grotesque exaggeration. It was a carpenter's proverb, and it is no unwarrantable fancy to recognize in it special fitness on the lips of him who had earned his daily bread in a carpenter's shop. It was a Jewish proverb, but the habit it satirizes is a general and abiding fault of human nature. *David Smith,* in *Our Lord's Use of Common Proverbs.*

24. *Built his house upon the rock.* In the hill country the houses are all built of heavy masonry. As no wood is ever used in the building of walls, roofs, or floors, it becomes necessary to have thick walls, set on solid foundations of rock, and the walls are often from two to five feet in thickness, the ceiling or roof being vaulted. Very often it is necessary to dig from twenty to fifty feet in the ground until the bed of rock is reached, especially when upper stories are built. In towns or villages of the plains, where rocks and stones are scarce, the houses are built of bricks made of sun-dried clay or mud, and often in these regions, where the periodical rains are very heavy and long continued, the mud houses collapse from the rain. *Gamahliel Wad-el-Ward,* in *Palestine through the Eyes of a Native.*

27. *The rain descended and the floods came.* In all Western Asia the rains, though comparatively infrequent, are copious and heavy while they last. The uneven and often abrupt surface of the country, presenting steep mountain heights and deep valleys, occasions, during a storm, the rapid gathering of waters to a single point, so that mighty torrents suddenly appear rushing along through gorges where not a drop of water trickled a moment before. These pour down with terrible force, often tearing away rocks and trees, and wrecking all before them. Houses erected near their track are in imminent danger of being carried away by the angry floods. Should there be any weakness in their foundation, the rushing waters soon work their way beneath, and, undermining the building, bear it away bodily. *Van Lennep, Bible Customs.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

From Luke's version of Jesus' great sermon to his disciples, the same sermon, though abridged, which Matthew gives and we call the Sermon on the Mount, we have had two lessons: first, the four Beatitudes and the four

the supreme and the sole secret of a Christlike character and life, is to be ever with Christ and reflecting him—catching his nature, his mind and spirit, insensibly and unconsciously, by mere proximity and contagion.

A Prayer.

Dear Master, in whose life I see
All that I would but fail to be,
Let thy clear light for ever shine
To shame and guide this life of mine.
Though what I dream and what I do,
In my weak days are always two;
Help me, oppressed by things undone,
O thou whose deeds and dreams are one! *John Hunter.*

II Hearing and Doing

"Dyed Ones." The Talmud speaks of "the dyed ones," of "those who preach beautifully but do not beautifully." There are many such "dyed ones" to-day, who are ready to profess allegiance to Christ, to say "Lord, Lord," but who are not ready to obey the commands of the Lord. It is not the amount of religious knowledge that avails, but the amount that one puts into practice. In the words of Dr. Henry van Dyke: Between the knowing and the doing, there is a deep gulf. Into that abyss the happiness of many a man slips and is lost. There is no peace, no real and lasting felicity for a human life until the gulf is closed, and the continent of conduct meets the continent of creed, edge to edge, lip to lip, firmly joined forever. It is not a blessing to know the things that Christ teaches, and then go on living as if they were false and doubtful. It is a trouble, a torment, a secret misery. To know that God is our Father, and yet to withold our love and service from him; to know that Christ died for us, and yet to deny him and refuse to follow him; to know that there is an immortal life, and yet to waste and lose our souls in the pursuit of such small portion of the world as we may hope to gain—surely that is the deepest of all unhappiness.

A Misconception. One morning as Robert Moffat was leaving the mission station at Kuruman, in South Africa, he met a Bechuana man coming toward the house. The man's face was so sad that the great missionary stopped and held out his hand.

"You are in trouble, my friend," he said; "tell me what it is."

"O, sir," was the reply, "it's my dog. You remember my good dog that guarded the sheep? He was so fierce and so full of courage he could drive off any wild beast that might come. But now he is spoiled, I might as well have lost him."

"Why, what has happened to him?"

"Why, sire," replied the man, "he got hold of my New Testatment and tore it to pieces, and then ate up most of the pieces."

"Well, never mind about that, my friend. You shall have another Testament at once."

"Thank you, sire; thank you. But what shall I do with my dog? He was such a fighter! But you know the New Testament makes people full of love and gentleness, and my dog has eaten so much of it I am sure there is no more fight in him."

So real was the man's distress that for a time it was impossible to comfort him. But by and by, after Mr. Moffat patiently explained to him that eating the leaves of God's book could not change a man's nature, much less a dog's, he went away satisfied. *Belle M. Brain,* in *Adventures with Four-Footed Folk.*

Do not let Good Resolutions die. Professor James in his Psychology gives this good advice:

Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain. No matter how full a reservoir of maxims one may possess, and no matter how good one's sentiments may be, if one has not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to act, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions, hell is proverbially paved. Every time a resolution or a fine glow of feeling evaporates without

bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge.

What Ha' ye Done?

And they came to the gate within the wall, where Peter holds the keys.
"Stand up, stand up now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high
The good that ye did for the sake of men, or ever ye came to die,—
The good that ye did for the sake of men in little earth so lone!"
And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rainwashed bone.

"This I have read in a book," he said, "and that was told to me,
And this I have thought that another man thought of a prince in Muscovy."
And Peter twirled the jangling keys in weariness and wrath.
"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought," he said, "and the tale is yet to run:
By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer,—what ha' ye *done?*"

Kipling.

A Prayer.

Saviour and Master
These sayings of thine,
Help me to make them
Doings of mine. *Paxton Hood.*

III THE HOUSE OF LIFE

All are Builders. All the world is building. I admit that a large part of them, probably the great majority, do not know it, and have never thought of it, yet building they are, and ever will be. Aye! and not only are they builders, but they are builders of that which they love the best and in which they have the nearest interest—they are builders of themselves. Let every one—high or low, rich or poor, young or old, the loftiest genius and the veriest dunce, the most careful husbandman of the gifts which God has entrusted to him, and the most profligate and abandoned gambler—let them all know at all times and in all conditions and circumstances they are builders, and are builders of themselves. *W. E. Gladstone.*

Different Ways of Building. Now and then in the outskirts of a city one passes an open piece of ground with a few cart-loads of stones flung down anyhow; and it is in this condition that too many lives stay to the end—collected materials for a noble character, you may call them, never fitted nor framed together, and finally left in the same rudimentary state as at first. Memories of home are there, and friends, and Christian knowledge, and all other things that might go to the making of a man after God's own heart; but yet, for lack of decision to rise and in God's name *build,* not one stone is laid upon another. And then, in other cases, as we know, the work is done, but done so carelessly and crookedly, and with such fatal unseen flaws in the foundation, that one day, unsuspected by the man's friends, or even by the man himself, there come a trembling and a gaping in the walls, and the house that seemed built to last goes down in dust and shame. Friends, you are staking all upon the soundness of the edifice, and you have no more than one chance; therefore let both materials and workmanship be as good as you can furnish. Get down to the real foundation and pierce, as lighthouse engineers do, into the living rock. When they build a mansion in Rome or Jerusalem to-day, they have to dig, often through scores of feet of rubbish, the débris of old empires, ere they find what will bear the superincumbent weight; and just so, if we are dead in earnest, and resolved that for us life shall rise firmly based on truth, as truth is in Jesus, then moral and spiritual excavation of a far-reaching kind may have to be the first stage of the business. If the deepest things in you have not gone down, and clasped themselves like strong roots, around the great attributes and promises of God, so that he has become the eternal portion, some day you will see the topstone swaying to its fall under the stress of wind and flood. In his will is our peace, and beneath the shadow of his wings our refuge. *Hugh R. Mackintosh,* in *Life on God's Plan.*

How to test your Building. The plumb-line is a cord with a metal weight

attached to one end, which the builder uses to ascertain whether the wall is perpendicular; and the square, in its turn, shows when an angle is a right angle. Now the precepts of Holy Scripture are the line and the square by which the character-builder is to test his work. *Charles Jerden.*

The Rock-founded Life. One thing marks the rock-founded life, the doing of Christly deeds. The enduring life is not built on dreams. Many people think that their lives are rock-founded because they have a nebulous admiration for the moral teachings of Jesus. One of the most dangerous hypocrites is that easy-going, thoughtless being who fancies that the indorsement of a duty is equivalent to the doing it.

Others imagine that an intellectual assent to certain statements concerning the church or the Bible or Jesus is sufficient to fix the life in stability. Instead of saying, as theologians do, first comprehend these doctrines and then you will be able to do them, Jesus says, first do these things, practice my precepts, and they will ere long become plain to you. Men learn religion by doing. Begin to do the right and you will get the reason; get the rule through the examination. Deeds are the solvents of doctrines.

The house of life is built differently from any other; we get the plans by erecting the structure. In the realm of character it is houses rather than architecture we need. Build but one hour's conduct squarely on the plain, cogent teachings of the Man of Nazareth, and you will serve the world better than if you gave a lifetime to the explanation of words. Doctrines are but teachings intended to be done into deeds. *Henry F. Cope,* in *Levels of Living.*

The House without Foundation. The teaching of our Lord in this parable is, that whatever in character is not based on the deepest life, life in himself, must be overthrown. In connection with the principal palace at Babylon was a remarkable construction, one of the wonders of the world, known to the Greeks as the "hanging gardens." Several tiers of arches formed an artificial imitation of a mountain, and on the top of this structure was a mass of earth on which grew flowers, shrubs, and trees. Where are these artificial elevations now? Gone, utterly gone, long ago, shaken to the earth, buried in the ditch. All around us we see the glory, the joy, and the hope of men resting like the "hanging gardens" of Babylon on an artificial basis, and any slight accident—sickness, a loss, a death, any one of a thousand changes—wrecks the treasure and pride of life. But the natural gardens of the earth, those which rest on the granite pillars of the deep underworld, bloom to-day as they did in the primitive ages—the grass as green, the flowers as sweet, the blossoms as gay, the forests as grand as in the morning of the ages. Building on Christ we build on the eternal reality, nor shall we suffer shame. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Bane and the Antidote.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Search thine own heart. What paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be. *Whittier.*

Wherever there is dirt in the heart there will be dust in the eyes. *Jowett.*

"Less talk and more walk."

Christianity is not a vision or a thought or a dream; it is action, conduct, life. *Charles E. Jefferson.*

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Jn. 13.17.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Mt. 7.21.

He that is lavish in words is niggard in deeds. *Walter Raleigh.*

The wicked are overthrown, and are not; but the house of the righteous shall stand. Prov. 12.7.

Beware of the man who does not translate his words into deeds. *Roosevelt.*

Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lowly action. *James Russell Lowell.*

If we do not turn our beliefs into practice they will not long be our beliefs. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Religion is that filial attitude of the spirit which in all things seeks to do the will of God; and this is manifested quite as really and religiously in the daily life as in the sanctuary. *Borden P. Bowne.*

Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Ps. 127.1.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Longfellow has voiced the chief lesson:—

And I remember still
The words, and from whence they came—
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will!

Few people intend to build their lives on a poor foundation; they simply give little or no thought to it, but the result of such thoughtlessness is the same as of deliberate planning. The true foundation principles are given in Christ's teachings. On what foundation are you building?

The Gospel of Christ emphasizes doings rather than doctrines, and offers a creed only as the foundation of a character. *J. Stuart Holden.*

Our Prayer. O Christ, our Saviour and King, thou who speakest with authority, help us to obey thy teachings. Guide us through the narrow gate into the way that leadeth unto life, and with thy help we shall never leave it. We are building day by day, and only as we build on thee, the true Foundation, will the structure that we rear withstand storm and tempest. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

I False and true Teachers, 39-45.
  1. The Danger from False Teachers, 39-40.
    a. Blind Guides, 39.
    b. Blind Pupils, 40.
  2. Like False Teachers, Blind Guides are they who themselves guilty sit in judgment upon others, 41-42.
  3. How to Test the False and the True, 43-45.
II Final Exhortation, 46-49.
  1. Profession versus Practice, 46-49.
    a. Illustration, 47-49.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Review lessons I, II and VII of the First Quarter. 2. What five statements were made in regard to John in the first lesson? How did he fulfil the prophecy? 3. How had John dressed in the wilderness? (Lesson VII, First Quarter.) 4. What had John expected Jesus as Messiah to do? 5. Why was John in prison? (Mk. 6.17-20.) 6. What spirit did John show when his disciples tried to make him envious of Jesus? (Jn. 3.25-30.) 7. What does Jesus say in Jn. 5.36 about the testimony of his works? 8. What instance of the raising of the dead is recorded as taking place before this time? (Lk. 7.11-17.) 9. What did Jesus think of John? 10. What did John think of Jesus? (Jn. 1.26, 27.) 11. What does James say in Jas. 1.6-8 about a man that resembles a reed? 12. Where in the Old Testament is the quotation of v. 10 found? (See reference in your Bible.) 13. What are the characteristics of the Gospel according to Mark? (Clipping, p. 29.) 14. What is its style? (Clipping, page 30.)

Questions to think about. 1. What circumstances led John to doubt Jesus' Messiahship? (Clipping, p. 230.) 2. What is meant by "The Coming One"? 3. How many and what mighty works of Jesus have our lessons thus far recounted? 4. What is the meaning of v. 6? (Clipping, p. 231.) 5. What is the meaning of the question in v. 7? (Clipping, p. 231.) 6. What sort of man would be like a reed? 7. In how many respects was John great? 8. What is the meaning of verse 11? (Clipping, p. 236.) 9. What is the meaning of verse 12? 10. Why had John denied that he was Elijah (Jn. 1.19-28), and why did Jesus call him Elijah? 11. What is the teaching of verses 16-19? (Clipping, p. 232.) 12. John came neither eating nor drinking: does this mean that he lived without any food or drink whatever? What, then, does this expression show as to the impossibility of taking all Christ's words literally?

Note Book Work. See page 17, Introduction.

LESSON XI—JUNE 16

CHRIST'S WITNESS TO JOHN THE BAPTIST

Golden Text

Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he. Luke 7.28

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 11.2-19. Christ's Witness to John the Baptist. **T.** Mark 1.1-8. John the Messiah's Forerunner. **W.** Luke 3.7-14. John's Ministry. **T.** John 1.29-34. John's Witness to Jesus. **F.** Luke 7.24-35. Jesus' Commendation of John. **S.** Matt. 14.1-12. John's Death. **S.** Rev. 2.8-11. Faithfulness unto Death. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 11.2-19 READ Luke 7.19-35 Commit vv 5, 6

2 Now when John heard in the prison the works of the Christ, he sent by his
disciples 3 and said unto him, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?
4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and tell John the things which
ye hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers
are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have
good tidings preached to them. 6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no
occasion of stumbling in me.
7 And as these went their way, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes con-
cerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken
with the wind? 8 But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft *raiment*?
Behold, they that wear soft *raiment* are in kings' houses. 9 But wherefore
went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a
prophet. 10 This is he, of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not
arisen a greater than John the Baptist; yet he that is but little in the kingdom
of heaven is greater than he. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until
now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by
force. 13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if
ye are willing to receive *it*, this is Elijah, that is to come. 15 He that hath ears
to hear, let him hear. 16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is
like unto children sitting in the market-places, who call unto their fellows 17
and say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not
mourn. 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath
a demon. 19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold,
a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And
wisdom is justified by her works.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2-3. *John.* John the Baptist.—*In the prison.* His arrest is mentioned in Mt. 4.12. See also Mt. 14.3.—*The works.* Especially the miracles.—*By his disciples.* They were jealous for their master, and John may have sent them to be convinced that Jesus is the Christ, verse 3, but it is probable also that the depressing effect of prison life and the fact that Jesus was so different from the Messiah with axe in hand whom he had expected, that John's own faith had begun to waver.—*By.* The Authorized Version reads *Two of.* The Revisers believe that the Greek preposition διὰ by, through, by means of, was changed in some manuscripts to δύο, to agree with Lk. 7.19.—*He that cometh.* See Ps. 118.26. "The answer of history is clear and decisive: the life of Jesus

is the knot in which all the threads of previous history are gathered up, and from which the threads of succeeding events again diverge" (*Ramsay*).

4-6. *Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see.* "Virtually that was to say 'I have deliberately chosen my method; my kingdom is spiritual; hence I must work through the individual, for only by regenerating the individual do I expect to regenerate the world'" (*Marcus Dods*). Verse 5 is an enumeration of the things which they heard and saw, verse 4. Luke adds *In that hour he cured many.*—*Good tidings.* Or, *the gospel.*—Verse 6 means, Blessed is he who believes in me, however different I may be from his preconceived notions of the Messiah.

7-10. *These.* The disciples of John.—*What went ye out into the wilderness to behold?* See Mt. 3.1-5.—*A reed shaken with the wind?* No! a firm oak. Jesus hastens to assure his audience that John, even though he had asked the question of verse 2, was no wavering, vacillating man, who did not know what to believe. But see another interpretation in Light from Oriental Life.—*Clothed in soft raiment?* His raiment was of camel's hair, Mt. 3.4.—*But... prophet?* Many ancient authorities read, But what went ye out to see? a prophet? RVm.—*Much more than a prophet.* The messenger of God, verse 10. —*It is written.* Mal. 3.1.

11-14. *Yet he that is but little* (Greek *lesser*) *in the kingdom is greater than he.* See Third Topic, p. 235.—*Men of violence take it by force.* The Greek verb ἁρπάζουσιν, translated *take by force,* means literally *carry off, seize hastily.* Before the time of John many were passively expecting the coming of the kingdom but John had aroused them and now in their eagerness for its coming they might be compared to soldiers storming a citadel.—*The Law and the Prophets* were preparatory to the fulfillment which began with the coming of John.—*If ye are willing to receive it.* They were unwilling, for they expected Elijah himself to return to life. John himself thought of a literal interpretation of Malachi's words when he denied that he was Elijah, Jn. 1.21.—*It.* Or, *him,* RVm.—*This is Elijah that is to come.* The Baptist was the Elijah promised by Malachi (4.5) who had come in the spirit and power of Elijah, Lk. 1.17.

15-17. *Ears to hear.* Some ancient authorities omit *to hear,* RVm.—*Let him hear.* These words were frequently spoken by Jesus to remind his hearers of their need of understanding and accepting an important teaching.—*This generation.* The unreasonable Pharisees and scribes, who would accept neither the austere John nor the social Jesus.—*Market-places.* The public squares where the people congregated.—*We piped.* Played on an instrument somewhat like a flageolet.—*Ye did not dance.* John would not join in their gayeties, verse 18.—*Mourn.* Greek *beat the breast,* RVm. Jesus' life was joyous, verse 19, and this did not please them.

18-19. *Neither eating nor drinking.* He lived the life of an ascetic, and did not share in the festivities of others.—*He hath a demon.* Compare Jn. 7.20; 8.48,52; 10.20. "He is crazy," we sometimes say of one whose views differ from our own.—*The Son of man.* Compare our expressions, son of the soil, son of New York, the former indicating a man's origin, the latter his devotion also to the state of his birth. Jesus sprang from humanity, lived and died for humanity.—*Eating and drinking.* We hear of Jesus at several feasts.—*A gluttonous man and a winebibber.* A false conclusion drawn from a true premise. —*A friend of publicans and sinners.* A charge that is a tribute.—*Wisdom.* Wisdom, here personified, is the wisdom of God, Lk. 11.49: both John and Jesus had been sent by God, and results prove that their different characters and teachings were parts of his wise plan.—*Is.* Or, *was,* RVm.—*Works.* Many ancient authorities read *children*: as in Lk. 7.35, RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *And Jesus answered and said.* He sent "from the prison"—which was the excuse for the message—to ask the question, "After all, *art* thou he that should come?" And it was that very moment of tremulousness which Jesus had seized, in order to pour an unstinted flood of praise for the firmness of his convictions, on the wavering head of the Forerunner. So, if we feel that though the needle of our compass points true to the pole, yet when the compass-frame is shaken, the needle sometimes vibrates away from its true direc-

tion, do not let us be cast down, but believe that a merciful allowance is made for human weakness. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *The Gospel of St. Luke.*

4. *The things which we hear and see.* We have grown used to the story of Christ's deeds. Think of the freshness of the impression made when the School of Christ was young, both by what he said and by what he did! What a sensation it must have been to be with a Person who said so many things worth saying and did so many things worth doing! We have seen an occasional person who could talk wisely and act foolishly; many another mighty in word and feeble in deed; an occasional silent man, or man of blundering speech, whose deeds were divine. But everything our Master said was worth saying; there was nothing better to be said. Everything he did was worth doing; there was nothing better to be done. The words and the deeds matched each other. Condensed from *In the School of Christ,* by *Bishop McDowell.*

18. *He hath a demon.* "The sending of Christian missionaries into our Eastern possessions is the maddest, most expensive, most unwarranted project that was ever proposed by a lunatic enthusaist," said the British East India Company early in the nineteenth century.

In "Twenty Years at Hull House" Miss Jane Addams informs us that because she could not see just as they did, party Socialists once disowned her, and because she could see and sympathize with the despair of a man in the clutches of a hopeless philosophy, she was called an anarchist.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

7. *A reed shaken with the wind?* In the Talmud there occurs this passage: On that day, R. Simeon B. Eleasar preached: Let a man be always soft (pliable) like a reed, and not hard (unbending) like a cedar. For just as this reed, all the winds come and blow on it, and it sways to and fro therewith. But when the winds cease, the reed returns and stands in its place. Therefore the reed is rewarded that a pen is taken from it to write with it a Book of the Law. But a cedar does not abide in its place; for when the north wind blows it is uprooted and cast down. And what is the end of the cedar? The woodmen come and cut it up and build houses therewith, and the rest is cast into the fire. Hence it has been said: "Let a man be as pliable as a reed, and not unbending as a cedar."

Did not, therefore, our Lord mean to answer his question in the affirmative, and say: It is true, that in the storm of doubt and despondency passing over his soul, John was like "a reed shaken with the wind," brought very low, almost swallowed up by the waterfloods. But once my message shall reach him, the storm shall cease; peace shall possess his soul, and like a reed he shall lift up his head, stand upright, and remain firm and faithful. *C. P. Sherman,* in *Expository Times.*

17. *We wailed, and ye did not mourn.* More literally, "did not beat your breast." The scene that Jesus drew was what a modern child would call "playing funeral"; only in Palestine of Jesus' day the customs of mourning offered a much more fertile field for the heartless imitation of children than is the case with us. "Don't you know," says one child to another, "that unless you beat your breast when I begin to wail, you spoil the whole game?" *Shepherd Knapp,* in *Biblical World.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In five earlier lessons we have heard about John the Baptist. Our first lesson of the year was the announcement made of his birth to his father Zacharias; our second, his birth and naming; our seventh, his ministry; our eighth, his baptizing of Jesus. After that baptism some of John's disciples left him to become disciples of Jesus. Others remained with him, and once, at least, they tried to arouse in him envy of Jesus by showing that his own influence was passing away. "Rabbi," they said to him when he was baptizing at Ænon, "he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth and all men come to him." But John was too great a man to be envious, and he answered gladly, "He must increase, but I must decrease." In our ninth lesson we learned that John was imprisoned by Herod, and the news led Jesus to leave Judea and go to Galilee. One day,

after John had been in prison perhaps a year, in the early summer of the year 28 A. D., his mind being troubled by Jesus' failure to wield the axe as he had expected, he sent a messenger to him with a plain, direct question, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?

Matthew introduces this account with the words: And it came to pass when Jesus had finished commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities. "It came to pass" is a form of expression used by Matthew several times when dropping one section of his record for another. Between the Sermon on the Mount and John the Baptist's last message, Jesus at Capernaum had healed the centurion's servant, and at Nain had restored to life the widow's son.

This lesson aptly illustrates the words of Jesus' sermon studied last Sunday. By their fruits ye shall know them, he had cried, and by his own fruits he would have John know him: Go and tell John the things which ye see and hear, was his answer to John's question.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

According to Josephus the place in which John was imprisoned was a fortress east of the Dead Sea called Machærus, a fortress surpassed only by Jerusalem in strength. Dungeons are still visible in its ruins, and there are holes in their walls that once held bars to which prisoners were doubtless chained. The interview between John's disciples and Jesus took place somewhere in Galilee.

Assign paragraphs 172, 61-65, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

"The Bible was written to tell us what to do on Sundays," a smart lad told his Sunday-school teacher. Miss Slattery once asked her day-school pupils what heroes they most admired; they quickly named Lincoln, Washington, etc., only two of them naming Christ. A few weeks later she asked the same question of the same scholars in the Sunday-school lesson period, and thirty-two named Christ. Make sure that your pupils do not associate Christ and religion only with Sundays. Teach them constantly that the Bible is a very practical book, having far more to say about daily conduct than about Sunday worship, and that Jesus Christ is the Guide of their daily lives and of every part of their daily lives. In order to gain time for this great truth, in connection with to-day's lesson, omit verses 7-15, which are difficult for your pupils. Recall by questions John's early life in the wilderness, his public ministry, how he had expected that Jesus would punish the wicked; show them Raphael's picture of the Baptist, Perry No. 340, or Titian's, Wilde No. 43. Then picture his life in prison, and his disappointment over the fact that Jesus was different from what he expected: see Suggestions for Younger Pupils. After a brief talk about his question and Jesus' answer, and the miracles already studied which John's disciples told John about when they returned to him with Jesus' answer, pass on to verses 16-19, explaining the children's games (see p. 232). Just as some children would play neither a gloomy game, nor a joyful game, so the people were pleased neither with John who was severe and gloomy nor with Jesus who was friendly and joyous. Dwell upon the daily life of Jesus, showing that he was not preaching all the time but went to great feasts just as others did; recall the feast given by Matthew which he attended, and picture him as the great Companion in all the ordinary affairs of life.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Where had John the Baptist lived before he began his public work? What had been his food and clothing? Where had he preached? What sort of life had he lived then? Who had put him in prison? How would such a man with such fiery energies as his, endure confinement? John was a mighty eagle in spirit, made for lofty flight, not for dungeon life. What effect would his fate have upon his state of mind? What had John said that the One would do who was mightier than he? His fan is in his hand, thoroughly to

cleanse his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire, he had told his hearers. Had John seen or heard any evidence of such a Judge? Month after month had passed, and no tidings had reached him of such a nature. What, too, might he naturally have expected Jesus to do for his Forerunner? Instead, he was left in prison, and he brooded over all these things till he fell a prey to agonizing doubt. Had it all, then, been a great mistake, his preaching, and his preparing the way for that One who was so different from what he had expected? What did he do when this doubt assailed him?

For Older Pupils. One of the six commissioners now engaged in superintending the construction of the Panama Canal was a reporter on a Providence paper at five dollars a week the year following his graduation from Brown University. Possibly his munificent income had something to do with the despondent state of his mind, but he was losing his faith in Christianity, and was so tortured by his doubts that he went to his pastor and asked him to solve his problems. Four evenings they spent together in grave discussion, but the young man was no nearer a solution. On his arrival the fifth evening his pastor looked at him in surprise. "What has happened?" he asked. "I've been to someone who has answered all my questions," returned the happy youth. "Not the one on the doctrine of the Atonement and the one on the divinity of Christ?" "Yes, and all the others, too; I went to Christ himself."

John the Baptist was tortured by doubts in regard to Jesus, and he knew that the only way to have them solved was by sending to Jesus himself. What reason had John for being despondent? For doubting that Jesus is the Christ? Review lesson 7 of First Quarter.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Credentials of the Christ

Believe Me for the very Works' Sake. This Youth comes down from the hill-village of Nazareth, moves among all classes of society, and treats them as having equal rights. He announces the golden axiom that as we would that men shall do to us, even so should we do to them, and he practises it. He goes about doing good, healing, comforting, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, succoring the dying pariahs and wastrels of society; he earns the splendid reproach that he is the friend of publicans and sinners. He utters parable after parable, the aim of which is to teach kindliness and love; applauds the good Samaritan; rebukes Dives, pities Lazarus; pictures the Judgment-seat of God as the solemn tribunal where men are judged for their love of one another, or their lovelessness; himself dies forgiving his enemies, and breathing benediction on a thief who perishes with him. At the time, perhaps, not even his disciples comprehended the significance of these words and actions; but they were not forgotten. After a while they emerged into dazzling distinctness, and attracted the attention of the world. Men meditated over them, talked of them one to another, and at last strove to live in the same spirit. A company of men and women arose whose avowed object was to live as this Youth lived, and they began to overspread the world. And so the Church of Christ begins—a confederacy of men and women who love him, love one another, and love all men; the religion of humanity begins; pity, tenderness, and consideration soften the human heart; slavery dies out, gladiatorial combats cease; wealth is shared, poverty is cheerfully endured, labor becomes honorable, and the keynote of a new morality is struck, that it is more blessed to give than to receive—to minister than to be ministered unto. All this as the fruit of a single brief Life lived long ago in Palestine. All our liberties, rights, humanities, moralities as the direct result of a Life that perished on the Cross! How will you judge that Life? What can you make of a story so splendid and so nearly incredible? Forget, if you please, all that theology has to say about this wondrous Youth of Nazareth; regard it as unthinkable if you must; still the works remain, and the divine challenge reaches us, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." *Dr. W. J. Dawson,* in *The Divine Challenge.*

Mightier Works To-day testify of Him. "I have found a great Friend, and I want to tell you about him." With these words a man began his talk in the

police-station of a great city. "It was a straight-arm, parry-and-thrust sort of a sermon," said a visitor, "with such oratory as a man achieves after five years of haranguing a brick wall. But it landed. It was about 'My Friend and your Friend,' who had taken him out of the gutter, and was able to save even unto the police-station." And then the visitor, writing in a recent paper, describes the result. When the short sermon was ended, and the leader asked the men to pray with him, every man of the sixteen in the cells went down on his knees, and the prayer was heard in perfect silence, broken only by an occasional sob. The service was repeated in the corridor where the "drunks" were assembled. Boisterous they were at first, but the service calmed them down and at length brought every man to his knees, save one who was too drunk to kneel. Again up-stairs, where twenty-seven young girls were held, the service brought comfort and hope. "I came away," said the visitor, "thanking God for a religion that is as good in the prison as in the cathedral, and which can tell its story in plain, simple words that go to the heart in its sin and need. In the presence of what I had seen, theological discussions grew petty. Why should men ask whether mighty works were done in the cities of old when these mightier works are done in the midst of us?"

II Enjoying Natures

Jesus as an Enjoying Nature. The writer of the *Imitatio Christi,* a mediæval book, counsels: Flee from the throng of the world into the wilderness as much as thou canst; for the talk of worldly affairs is a great hindrance, although spoken with sincere intention!

To Jesus the world was God's world, it was good, and it was made for men, not men for it. In his great intercessory prayer, Jesus prayed, not that God would take his followers out of the world, away from feasting and pleasure and business, but that he would keep them in the world, safe from the evil. Jesus himself was concerned, not with a part of life only, but with the whole, with social as well as spiritual interests. His feasting with others not only sanctioned but hallowed all customary, social life; it did away with that division of life into what we are wont to call secular and religious, giving us instead a division that we might call indirectly religious and directly religious. For his example was rightly interpreted by Paul when he wrote to the Corinthians, Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

The Church and Enjoying Natures. I suspect that true souls are always hilarious, and that one step towards the restoration of the evangel in the Church would be the breaking of the tradition—that a religious man ought to be grave and even sombre—and the letting in of the sun. The Church has never made what she might of the enjoying natures. They do not like to sit still; they have no habit of meditation, and much of the preaching which they hear touches on nothing that closely concerns them. And so they have grown apart, the joy of many homes, the pride in hours of crisis of their country for which, in their reckless way, they venture all—creatures whose departure would take the color and interest out of the world, and yet we get but little from them for the work of Jesus Christ. The Church has commonly got little from them, because it has understood them badly; but Jesus himself understood, and at this point he and the Pharisees were at war. *Dr. Macgregor, Sermons.*

Joy a Fruit of the Spirit. "She seems to embody almost all of the 'fruits of the spirit' except joy," said an observing young girl of an earnest Christian woman. "She's evidently full of love for her fellow-creatures, if self-sacrifice and generosity mean anything. She is long-suffering and patience personified, she's gentleness, meekness, temperance, goodness and faith, and all those other lovely things except joy. I do think she lacks that; she is really depressing sometimes. Well"—judicially—"perhaps she's more joyful than she looks. I'm sure I hope so." *Bertha G. Woods.*

A Great Truth.

An' it's give' me to perceive,
I most certainly believe
When a man's jest glad plum' through,
God's pleased with him, same as you,

is James Whitcomb Riley's way of telling us a great truth. God loves to see his children happy. George Matheson's counsel is good: "Covet, for Christ's sake, each gift of body, each gift of mind; tune the harp for him; twine the wreath for him; plant the flower for him; wear the garment for him; keep thy hold on the world for him."

III Missionary Topic Christianity and Non-Christian Religions

John the Baptist and the Little One in the Kingdom. Slowly, throughout centuries of time, the Hebrew people had been receiving a knowledge of God, gaining a clearer and clearer insight into his nature and will, until the perfect revelation was given by the coming of his Son, Jesus Christ. Of all who belonged to the pre-Christian revelation there was none greater than John, Jesus declared. Not Moses, nor Elijah, nor Isaiah, nor Jeremiah? We know much about the work of these Old Testament prophets, and but little about that of John, yet we know enough to see that in absolute self-forgetfulness and perfect devotion, holy earnestness, utter fearlessness, and the greatness of the impression he made upon his age, no Old Testament Prophet was greater than he. He was the culminating representative of all the prophets of old, he had reached the highest stage that one could reach before Jesus came to lead upward to greater heights. While his work was introductory to that of the Christian dispensation, preparatory to the ushering in of the Kingdom of God, yet he himself was not enrolled in that Kingdom. To him God was an austere Judge enthroned on high; he knew the righteousness of God, not his lovingkindness and tender mercy; his power to punish, not his willingness to pardon. Dr. Broadus' helpful figure shows his position: His work may be compared to a landing-place in a stairway; the highest step of the lower flight, or the lowest step of the upper flight; or, higher than the highest of the one, lower than the lowest of the other.

John the Baptist Typical of the Non-Christian World. "Of the non-Christian religions Judaism is the greatest and noblest—that none will dispute. John the Baptist, then, may be regarded as a person typical not only of the Jewish faith at its highest but of the non-Christian world at its highest."

Forerunners of Christianity. Jesus did not despise John the Baptist, but regarded him as his forerunner. In like manner, non-Christian religions are not to be despised, for, in a sense, they actually prepare the way for Christianity. All over the world the ideas of God and the soul and the future life are to be found. True, not with the purity and strength that mark the Hebrew faith, but nevertheless in such a way that the materials are already to hand for the missionary to work upon. Men already have thoughts about guilt and atonement and sacrifice; they already believe in God, in heaven, and in divine rewards and punishments; they already attempt to hold intercourse with God in prayer, and expect some revelation from God as to their duty in relation to him. How desperate, how impossible would be the task of proclaiming Christ to a people utterly without these religious concepts!

In a remarkable address delivered at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh President Tasuku Harada of Japan spoke on the contribution of non-Christian races to the Body of Christ. "When I was in India," he said, "I was deeply struck by the intense spirituality of the Indian Christians. To commune with God continuously for many hours a day or even through the whole night to the dawn, is not considered extraordinary." This was due to the training they had previously had through Brahmanism, which had taught them that the highest state of mind was death to self and death to the world, so that they were ready for the Master's words: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." In respect to Japan, President Harada spoke of the extraordinary loyalty which their religion had encouraged in them. The boys of Japan are taught to live and die for their country, and as they become Christians this loyalty also is Christianized. When the Japanese Dr. Neesima was at Northfield, Mr. Moody asked the congregation to pray for him, but he at once protested: "Not for me, not for me, but for Japan." *Newton H. Marshall,* in *Jesus and Non-Christian Religions.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

It will matter very little what men think of us, if at last we have praise from the lips of him who poured such praise on his servant. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The Christian life that is joyless is a discredit to God and a disgrace to itself. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord. Eph. 5.19.

You do not make life sacred by looking sad. *Henry F. Cope.*

There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. *R. L. Stevenson.*

What is the use of saying our religion is a religion of joy if we do so with a sour face? *J. D. Jones.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

"I hear an earnest man say: "I cannot believe the Christ is in my life until I have an experience like that Mr. Moody had when he went as a flaming seraph over Great Britain influencing some of the finest types of mind of his time for Christ." You have a notion in your mind as to how Christ is coming into your life, and you are watching with the carefulness of a detective to see if he comes that way. If your experience does not come that way you will be disappointed. You are on the track of John the Baptist. *Dr. John Douglas Adam.*

He that is little in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. We know God more fully, and have mightier motives for serving him, and larger spiritual helps in serving him, than had any of the mighty men of old. We have a fuller revelation than Abraham had; have we a tithe of his faith? We have a mightier captain of the Lord's host with us than stood before Joshua; have we any of his courage? We have a tenderer and fuller revelation of the Father than had the psalmists of old; are our aspirations greater after God, whom we know so much better, than were theirs in the twilight of revelation? *Alexander Maclaren.*

Bear in mind Ruskin's word that we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing God if we are not happy ourselves.

Are you over-sensitive to the opinion of others, unhappy because you cannot please every one, made miserable by a word of criticism? There is a great lesson for you in the way Jesus met the criticism of his enemies: conscious that he was doing his Father's will and having his Father's approval, he was not at all disturbed by the criticisms of men. Our conduct under criticism is a keen test of our true natures.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Influence of Jesus on the social life of man. See chapter with this title in Phillips Brooks' "Influence of Jesus."

2. In what respects should the social life of a Christian differ from that of non-Christians?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Do not confound the Penitent Woman with Mary Magdalene: who was the latter? (Lk. 8.2; Mt. 27.56; 28.1.) 2. On what other occasion and by whom was Jesus anointed by a woman? (Jn. 12.1-8.) 3. How did the Pharisees regard women? (Clipping, p. 239.) 4. Describe the position of the guests at Simon's feast. (Clipping, p. 240.) 5. How much were the five hundred shillings worth? See foot-note of your Bible.) 6. What had Jesus said was his special mission to the world? (Lesson XII, Second Quarter.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why do you suppose Simon invited Jesus to his home? 2. What did his treatment of Jesus as his guest show? 3. What inference did Jesus leave for Simon to draw for himself from the parable of the Two Debtors? 4. When Jesus attended Matthew's feast, what did enemies say of Jesus? (Lesson XII, First Quarter.) 5. What charge was made against Jesus in our last lesson? 6. What light does this lesson throw upon these charges? 7. What earlier lesson is recalled by verse 49? (XI, First Quarter.) 8. What were some of Simon's sins? 9. What parable shows two characters like Simon the Pharisee and the Penitent Sinner? (Prodigal Son.)

Note Book Work. See p. 17, Introduction.

LESSON XII—JUNE 23

THE PENITENT WOMAN

Golden Text

Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1.15

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 7.36-50. The Penitent Woman. **T.** John 12.1-8. Mary Anoints Jesus' Feet. **W.** Ezek. 18.21-32. Penitence and Pardon. **T.** Matt. 15.21-28. Faith of the Canaanitish Woman. **F.** Luke 18. 9-14. Publican's Prayer. **S.** Dan. 9.3-16. Prayer of Penitence. **S.** Ps. 40.1-13. Deliverance and Joy. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 7.36-50 COMMIT vv 37, 38 or 47 (For the alternate Temperance Lesson, Eph. 5.11-21, see page 263 of the 1908 Guide)

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. 37 And behold, a woman who was in the city, a sinner; and when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster cruse of ointment, 38 and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee that had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, that she is a sinner. 40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Teacher, say on. 41 A certain lender had two debtors: the one owed five hundred shillings, and the other fifty. 42 When they had not *wherewith* to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him most? 43 Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44 And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. 45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. 47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. 48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. 49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that even forgiveth sins? 50 And he said unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

36-38. *One of the Pharisees.* Simon by name, verse 40.—*Eat.* The Greek word refers to the morning meal.—*Sat down to meat.* Or, *reclined at table,* RVm.—*A woman who was a sinner.* This woman is often wrongly called Mary Magdalene, or the Magdalene. The woman of this name was not a sinner, but an afflicted woman, Lk. 8.2, 3.—*When she knew.* See Light from Oriental Life. —*Sitting at meat.* Or, *reclining at table,* RVm.—*An alabaster cruse.* Or, *a flask,* RVm.—*Ointment.* Fragrant and valuable.—*Standing behind at his feet.* As Jesus reclined, according to custom, on the couch with his head by the table, the woman could easily reach his feet. The rabbis said that no woman should stand nearer them than four cubits.—*Wiped them with the hair of her head.* "To appreciate this act we must remember that it was one of the greatest humiliations for a woman to be seen with her hair dishevelled."—*Kissed.* Greek,

kissed much, RVm. "She could not have done this to a Pharisee, who would have repelled her with execration as bringing pollution by her touch" (*Farrar*).—*Anointed them with the ointment.* Among the Jews as well as among the Romans and Greeks it was common to anoint the feet of guests at a banquet.

Alabaster Vase bearing the name of Sargon

39-40. *If he were a prophet.* Some ancient authorities read *the prophet.* See Jn. 1.21, 25, RVm.—*She is a sinner.* He could see the woman that was a sinner, but he had never seen the man that was a sinner, although he had so often looked into the glass (*Watkinson*).—*Answering.* Jesus heard the Pharisee's thinking (*Augustine*).—*Simon.* Not Simon the leper, at whose house Mary anointed Jesus, Mt. 26.6. There are nine Simons mentioned in the New Testament.

41-43. *Shillings.* The word in the Greek denotes a coin worth about eight pence half-penny, or nearly seventeen cents, RVm. In purchasing power, the five hundred denarii are estimated as $250.—*Which of them will love him most?* It is not the amount of the debt forgiven but the estimate of the amount, which is the measure of the love and gratitude. "The way to love much is not to sin much, but to think much of sin" (*Cox*).—*I suppose.* The Greek might be translated "I imagine," as though Simon answered carelessly, superciliously, with no thought of the bearing of the question. "Mark the refinement of Socratic wit with which he gets the 'holier than-thou' Pharisee committed to the sentiment he desires to exalt!"

44-47. *No water.* It was customary to wash the feet of guests on arrival.—*No kiss.* A kiss was the customary mode of salutation between men.—*Oil.* Which was cheap in comparison with the woman's ointment.—*Wherefore.* Jesus is explaining the reason for his *saying* to Simon that the woman is forgiven, not the reason for the forgiveness.—*Her sins are forgiven.* This statement, that her many sins have been forgiven, is rightly made to Simon, because he knew of her great sinfulness, he had witnessed her loving reverence, and he had admitted the principle that the forgiveness of much produces much love (*Plummer*). Simon thought that Jesus was lacking in insight; yet this was precisely what he himself lacked: he had sight, and could see the woman that was a sinner: Jesus had insight, and could see the woman that was a conscious sinner, a penitent sinner, a pardoned sinner (*Watkinson*).—*For she loved much.* She loved because she was forgiven; she was forgiven because she loved (*Farrar*).—*To whom little is forgiven.* Who does not feel that he needs much to be forgiven.

48-50. *He said unto her.* To speak with a woman as well as to sit down to eat with common people was one of the six things no rabbi would do.—*Sat.* Greek, *reclined,* RVm.—*Within.* Or, *among,* RVm.—*Thy faith hath saved thee.* Her tears, salutations, and sacrifice were equivalent to the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and every other creed in which the Christian world has sought to express its faith: she believed in Christ with all her heart—in his mercy, his merit, his might, and her faith was counted unto her for righteousness (*Watkinson*).—*Go in peace.* The customary Hebrew form of blessing.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

37. *And behold, a woman.* The Pharisee, when he became conscious that he was in the neighborhood of a woman, turned away from her as if the mere sight of womankind were defiling. But Christ's bearing towards woman was courteous, kind and cordial to a degree that was sometimes surprising to those who were closely associated with him. The sisters in Bethany were his intimate friends; the society of disciples that gathered around his person and followed him in his wanderings embraced in its membership many women; he did not shun even women of evil repute, though Pharisaic critics drew sinister inferences, and even his chosen companions marvelled. It was the behavior of one in whom the one master passion was gracious, redeeming love, and who in this quiet way was inaugurating a social revolution. It was the action of an exceptionally holy Man, and of a great Initiator, the pure Lover of woman, and her Redeemer from social indignity. *A. B. Bruce,* in *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels.*

45. By this he meant to say: You are expecting to see some change in

my character by this woman's touch. You don't understand your own problem. So far from her caress interfering with my character I am communicating to her a divineness of character by which she is raising herself to a level you have never yet attained. *G. Campbell Morgan,* in an address.

47. *For she loved much.* Astronomers tell us that, sometimes, a star that has shone inconspicuous, and stood low down in their catalogues as of fifth or sixth magnitude, will all at once flame out, having kindled and caught fire somehow, and will blaze in the heavens, outshining Jupiter and Venus. And so some poor, vulgar, narrow nature, touched by this Promethean fire of pure love that leads to perfect sacrifice, will "flame in the forehead of the morning sky," an undying splendor, and a light for evermore. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *Similes and Figures.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

36. *Sat down to meat.* This phrase translates a single Greek verb, which literally means *reclined.* In Old Testament times the Jews had sat cross-legged on the floor, or on divans, before a table, but during the Exile they had probably become accustomed to reclining in imitation of the Persian custom, and from the time that Jerusalem was conquered by Pompey in 63 B. C. Greek and Roman influence kept up the custom.

37. *When she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house.* In some points of domestic life, the oriental maintains much greater privacy than we do; in others, where we avoid publicity, he courts it. An ordinary entertainment is a public affair. The gateway of the court, and the door or curtains of the guest-chamber, stand open. The animal which is to provide the staple of the repast, is killed and cooked in the open air. A long, low table, or more often merely the great wooden dishes, are placed along the center of the room, and low couches on either side, on which the guests, placed in order according to their rank, recline, leaning on their left elbow, with their feet turned away from the table. Every one, on coming in, takes off his sandals and leaves them at the door, socks or stockings being unknown. Servants stand behind the couches, and placing a wide, shallow basin on the ground, pour water over it on the feet of the guests. To omit this courtesy would be to imply that the visitor was one of very inferior rank. We can easily understand what a luxury this is to a travel-stained guest, who has walked over the hot sand of a Syrian road in summer. Behind the servant the loungers of the village crowd in, nor are they thought obstrusive in so doing.

Besides omitting the water for the feet, Simon had given Jesus no kiss. To receive a guest at the present day without kissing him on either cheek as he enters, is a marked sign of contempt, or at least a claim to a much higher social position. *H. B. Tristram,* in *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands.*

The writer of *A Narrative of a Mission to the Jews* in 1839, says: "At the Consul's house in Damietta there were seats all round the walls. Many came in and took their places on those side-seats, uninvited and yet unchallenged. They spoke to those at the table on business or the news of the day, and our host spoke freely to them."

Before sitting down to the table it was customary to wash the hands. This washing has always had a religious character in the East. The guests being seated, each one returned thanks separately in a low tone, after which they reclined, in oriental fashion, upon cushions and sofas. When all were settled, one of the guests gave thanks in a loud voice for all, and the rest said amen, or even repeated some of the words of the grace. The benediction pronounced at the beginning and end of the meal was prescribed by the Law. (Dt. 8.10.)

The Jews were very fond of family meals, and invitations were frequent. When the meal was of a religious character, or when special honor was to be shown to any particular guest, an aromatic oil was poured on the head.

The meat was brought round cut into small pieces, and the other viands in separate dishes. The head of the family distributed the portions (1 Sam. 1.4), and each one put his share upon the round loaf before him, and ate with his fingers. One dish of sauce served for all, and each in turn dipped his bread into it. (Mt. 26.23.) There is no mention in the Bible of either forks or spoons. Knives are mentioned in the Bible in the book of Proverbs (23.2) and elsewhere.

Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the Time of Christ. Thin slices of bread which could be conveniently rolled up were also made use of in conveying the food to the mouth. The broth was served in a separate dish from the meat, and was used for moistening the bread. *Bissell, Biblical Antiquities.*

46. ***My head with oil thou didst not anoint.*** To show special honor to a guest an aromatic oil was poured on the head.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

After his rebuke to the people who found fault both with John the Baptist and himself, Jesus upbraided because of their unbelief the cities of Galilee in which most of his mighty works had been wrought. "The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom is justified of her works." To-day's lesson is a concrete illustration of Jesus' social habit, from which the Pharisees drew their contemptible inference which is quoted in our text of last week. We see Jesus eating and drinking at the home of a Pharisee, for he accepted his invitation as readily as he had that of Matthew the publican, and proving himself at the Pharisee's home a friend of sinners even as he had at Matthew's home, and thus we learn the purpose of his meeting with outcasts whom Pharisees spurned. His meat and drink was to do the will of his Father, and the wisdom of God in giving the Saviour such work to do was justified.

The place is somewhere in Galilee and the time summer, A. D. 28. Assign a review of paragraphs 46, 47, 63-65 of *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

The strikingly clear lesson truth that snobbishness is sin is probably not needed by your pupils. Little children may become snobbish because of example and training, but by nature they are democratic. Instead, speak of Simon's rudeness to Jesus, explaining the customary eastern ways of honoring guests: tell about Washington, page 242, and teach your pupils that if they are truly kind at heart they will always treat others kindly and therefore courteously. Even Jesus who had so many things to teach, stopped to teach Simon the virtue of courteousness. Describe the feast at Simon's house, the manner of reclining at table, page 240, and the way the woman showed her sorrow and her love. Show Tissot's picture No. 42. If there is time after teaching the lesson, recall Lesson XI of the First Quarter, in connection with the Golden Text.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What feast did Jesus attend which was the subject of an earlier lesson? Who found fault with him for this? Of what did they accuse him? They called him "a friend of sinners" with much scorn, not knowing that they were saying a beautiful thing about him. Last week's lesson told what they charged Jesus with doing and being: what were the charges? Jesus had great compassion for sinners, and he sat with them and talked with them that he might do them good. Our story to-day shows how he gained the title of Friend of Sinners. To whose home was he invited?

For Older Pupils. Jean Beraud, a French artist, conceived the idea of presenting Christ as a living force to-day by portraying him in modern surroundings among modern people. In a series of scenes Christ only is robed in oriental costume; all others are in European dress, and represent modern self-righteous Pharisees, modern sinners and disciples. In his painting of Simon's Feast, the penitent woman, clad in a Paris robe, lies prostrate at the feet of Jesus: Simon, well-dressed, prosperous, self-satisfied, stands near-by looking disdainfully down on the penitent figure: grouped about the table are other guests, their faces mildly pitying, indifferent, or cynical.

Such paintings do violence to our historical sense but they are vivid modern applications of Christ's teachings.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Snobbishness

Simon's Spirit. Evidently the Pharisee had invited Jesus to his home out of

curiosity. All men were talking about the wonderful Rabbi who could cure all manner of diseases and the Pharisee would see and talk with him himself. But Jesus was far beneath him in social position, he considered, it was not necessary to show such a guest the customary marks of civility, and by his omission of the kiss and the water for the feet and the ointment for the head, all of which would have been offered to one deemed an equal, he showed the greatest rudeness possible for an oriental. What unbounded admiration do we have for Jesus as he rebukes his churlishness in that simple, dignified way!

"Respect of Persons." In one passage the New Testament flames out against the sinners who "show respect of persons for the sake of advantage." And we recognize the hateful fruits of this same spirit in modern society. Fawning and flattery are still horribly common; and they are practiced, as a rule, for the mean object of winning patronage and favor and securing some personal gain from influential people. Even ecclesiastics and philanthropists grow obsequious in the company of a millionaire, because they think he can do so much for the good cause which they have at heart. There are many imitators of those primitive disciples whom St. James condemned because they greeted a fashionable visitor with effusion, while they turned disdainfully from some poverty-stricken stranger who chanced to enter their assembly by the rich man's side. The apostle rebuked them quite as sternly for cringing to the one as for despising the other. Both forms of snobbishness are equally alien to the mind of Christ.

In his own estimate of mankind there was no respect of persons. It never occurred to him that outward distinctions of money or rank or race could make the smallest difference to a man's real status, or affect his value in the sight of God. Must we not confess also that he attached no more importance to learning in itself than to riches? For knowledge, after all, is a kind of intellectual wealth and is beset with corresponding temptations. When we look down upon simple-minded, unlettered disciples merely because they lack culture or education, we are doing despite to Jesus Christ. Editorial in *British Weekly.*

Blood Relations. The English frankly say that they love to have a king and royalty to whom they may look up as their superiors: Americans as frankly do not want those to whom they must look up as their social superiors, but—they couldn't live without their social inferiors!

It is said of Sir Walter Scott: He spoke to every man as if they were blood relations. Our creed says: I believe in the holy catholic church, and this is the meaning here of the word catholic, that all are blood relations, through their faith in a common Lord and Saviour. The Children's National Guild of Courtesy, an English organization, declares that "three of the bravest and greatest men who have ever lived—the Duke of Wellington, General Gordon and General Washington—were distinguished for their courteous behavior." Washington was not courteous to his equals and condescending or contemptuous to his inferiors; there was no snobbishness in his character; he was always and everywhere, courteous and kind. Once an officer expressed surprise that Gen. Washington returned the salutation of a negro, and Washington quietly remarked, "I should be very sorry if I had not as good manners as that negro."

Snobbishness exists in all so-called classes of society. Professor Geddes moved with his family into the slum district of Edinburgh in an effort to do friendly work among them, but when he invited a distinguished statesman to dine with a chimney-sweep and a scavenger, the statesman and the scavenger readily accepted the invitation, but the chimney-sweep refused to sit down with the scavenger.

II The Worth of a Soul

Jesus honored the Individual. An interesting point in the social life of Jesus is his courtesy. There is perhaps, no part of our life that is so unreal and unsatisfactory, none of which we find it so hard to give an account to ourselves, as the courtesy which we pay to one another. And there is none which, in the life of Jesus, is more thoroughly satisfactory and perfect. I find the secret of it in the clear perception and value of the personal life behind the class condition. True courtesy gets its essence from honor of the individual, while it gets its special form from consideration of the class condition. I may be

just as courteous to the beggar as to the king, but I do not treat them both alike. Now, when Jesus met the woman of Samaria at the well he honored her; he valued and reverenced her soul. When he met Pontius Pilate, he honored him. When he dealt day after day with the ripening treachery of Judas Iscariot, he honored him. When he found John the Baptist making the door ready through which he was to enter on his work, he honored him. The spiritual nature, the special humanity, of each of them seemed to him, not in any mere fiction but in simple truth, to be a beautiful and precious thing. His honor for that was the soul of his courteousness. And then the special words he said, whether of sympathy or of rebuke, might be just what the special occasion bade them be. Different as they were, they were all courteous alike because of this personal honor and value that filled them all. There is no complete courtesy that has not such a soul and such a body,—a soul of honor for the individual, living in and uttering itself through the intelligent recognition of the class condition. *Phillips Brooks,* in *The Influence of Jesus.*

The Modern Spirit. The instinct of modern men is not to destroy but to save. If a boy commits an offence against the law, it does not lock him in with hardened criminals to become as they are; it puts him in charge of men who will direct his energy into wholesome channels, evoke his self-respect by recognizing it, awaken his interest by teaching him how to work skilfully. If a slum breeds moral and spiritual disease, it does not anathematize those who live in it; it cleans out the slum, lets in the light, pours in the water, opens the settlement and the school, sends the warm-hearted Christian woman there. If there is unrest in a class, it does not begin by passing penal statutes; it begins by investigating conditions. *The Outlook.*

One who knew the Worth of a Soul. In a speech Governor Woodrow Wilson gave this personal experience. I was in a barber shop, in the chair, and I was aware that a personality had entered the room. A man came quietly in upon the same errand as mine, and sat in the chair next to me. Every word that he uttered, though it was not in the least didactic, showed a personal and vital interest in the man who was serving him, and before I got through with what was being done to me I was aware that I had attended an evangelistic service—for it was Mr. Moody in the next chair.

I purposely lingered in the room after he left, and noted the singular effect his visit had upon the barbers in that shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name; they did not know who had been there; but they knew that something had elevated their thought. And I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship. Mr. Moody always sought and found—the individual.

Rebuked.

I walked to-day, along a city street
  So squalid, so unclean, my whole soul shrank,
  Revolted, from foul sights and odors rank.
Naught could I see in those I chanced to meet
Save hard or sodden faces, shambling feet,
  Eyes bleared with vice and liquor. My soul drank
  The lees of loathing. Then it was—I thank
Who willed it!—that a Face, austere and sweet
And strong and pure had stopped me, like a hand
  Laid gently on me. O'er that thoroughfare
    Of wretchedness and sin they looked, those eyes
    Of One who was too tender to despise
  The least, or of the lowest to despair.
Rebuked, I passed. The Christ must understand.

Marion Warner Wildman, Lines written on Seeing Hofmann's picture of Christ in a Junk-Shop Window.

III CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS

The Depraved are Forgiven to-day. Professor Drummond was in the habit

of giving Sunday night talks to a large audience of students at Edinburgh, and always asked those who had any moral or spiritual difficulty to write him about it. One night he read part of a letter from a medical student who had fallen into deep sin. As he read the concluding words, which one who heard it said were weighted with the hopelessness of a lost soul, Professor Drummond said: "Gentlemen, if this man had given me his address I would have come over to Edinburgh by the next train to see him. I would fain hope he is here to-night." And then after telling what Jesus had done for the Penitent Woman and what he would do for the depraved to-day, he added: "As I walked through the city this morning, I noticed a cloud like a pure white bank resting over the slums. Whence came it? The great sun had sent down its beams into the city slums, and the beams had gone among the puddles, and drawn out of them what they sought, and had taken it aloft and purified it, and there it was, resting above the city, a cloud as white as snow; and God can make his saints out of material equally unfavorable. He can make a white cloud out of a puddle."

A Parable of the Human Soul. It was a West-end London drawing-room; an auction sale was in progress. It was a small crowd, but many of the great and fashionable were there, for the former master of the house had figured prominently in his day. The auctioneer had reached a violin; he lifted it, rubbed the place where the label should have been, and read out a famous name. Then he began to talk as only an auctioneer can talk, but despite his eloquence nobody would bid more than six guineas for that fiddle dark with age. He was giving up in despair of getting a proper price at all, when there was a movement at the door, and an old man came forward. Someone whispered Paganini, and it was the great violinist himself. Up to the table he came. Lovingly he lifted the instrument, and began to pick out a note here and there. Then he took the bow and began to play; at first low and soft and pleading, then glad, triumphant, strong, and then wailing and sad. When he laid it down there was not a dry eye in the room. Six guineas? One hundred, two, three, five, six, seven hundred, and Paganini was the proud possessor of the violin at seven hundred guineas! Without the master touch worth six guineas! Now, that is a parable. So is it with the human soul. Without the Master's touch, how poor, how broken, how worthless, how lost; but with the Master's touch anything is possible. The Lord Jesus Christ has attuned souls for whom no one else had any hope, has attuned them to the harmonies of heaven. And to-day his touch has still its ancient power. *Thomas Stewart,* in *God's Search for a Lost World.*

A Follower of the Christ. A young artist was finishing a picture which he had entitled "The Lost Woman." It portrayed a woman with a little one in her arms struggling along in darkness and storm. "Why should I be satisfied with picturing the lost?" the artist kept questioning himself. "Ought I not to go out and seek these poor lost ones and save them if I can?" The thought would not leave him, and throwing aside his brush he worked his way through college and secured a position as a minister. But still he was not satisfied: he would give all his time to the lost. On reading of the death of the great missionary, Huntington, in Africa, he felt that at last he knew where he wanted to be; at once he asked to be sent as a missionary to Eastern Africa, and in helping on the great work there he found the peace and satisfaction that his life had hitherto lacked.

SENTENCE SERMONS

In the meanest mortal there lies something noble. *Carlyle.*

Life is not so short but there is always time enough for courtesy. *Emerson.*

A man has nothing to do with his past save to get a future out of it. *Phillips Brooks.*

There is a courtesy of heart allied to love; from it springs the purest courtesy in the outward behavior. *Goethe.*

Help me
To share some weary traveler's crushing load,
And lead some wanderer back into the road. *Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman.*

To Jesus a lost soul was a soul not yet found. *Dr. Lyman Abbott.*

There is
One great Society alone on earth:
The noble Living and the noble Dead. *Wordsworth.*

The sense of the infinite worth of the single soul and the recoverableness of man at his worst, are the gifts of Christ. *Henry Drummond.*

The criminal is the waste product in the modern process of the manufacture of civilization: the problem is not how to reduce the waste, but how to convert it into something desirable and useful. *Youth's Companion.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Simon did not consider himself a five hundred shilling debtor, nor a fifty shilling debtor, nor a debtor of the smallest sum; he had no consciousness of sin, and no love for the Saviour. He opened the door of his house to Christ, but not the door of his heart. Is there danger of our being like him?

Let us be neither condescending nor servile but courteous at all times to all people. The word *courteous* means *belonging to court life,* and children of the King should show in their bearing that they are used to royal society.

"Let us for ourselves cordially, and in its fullest sense, accept the saying that Christ came into the world to save sinners."

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

Simon the Pharisee had invited Jesus to dine with him, and seemed to think this honor enough for the carpenter's son, for he failed to show him the civilities due an honored guest. During the meal a woman entered uninvited, and regardless of the others present, stood weeping at the feet of Jesus, wetting them with her tears and drying them with her hair, and then anointing them with precious ointment. Amazed that Jesus permitted this, Simon said to himself, "This Man can be no prophet or he would know that this woman is a sinner and would spurn her." Jesus looked at the Pharisee and quietly said: "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher, say on," returned the Pharisee. "A certain lender had two debtors, one who owed him five hundred shillings and one who owed him fifty, neither could pay and he forgave both: which of them will love him the more?" "Why, he, I suppose, to whom the lender forgave the more," carelessly answered Simon. "You are right," Jesus said, and then turning to the woman, added: "Do you see this woman? You gave me no water for my feet as I entered your house; she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss; she has constantly kissed my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil; she has anointed my feet with precious ointment. You recognize her as a sinner, but I tell you that her many sins are forgiven, for you recognize the tokens of her love and you know that much forgiveness leads to much love; but he who is little forgiven, loves little." And then to the woman Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven," and the others at the table asked themselves, "Who is this who claims to forgive sins?" "Your faith has saved you, go in peace," continued Jesus, the Christ who came into the world to save sinners.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The sovereign word to-day is Save. See Life Driving out Death, *Outlook,* Sept. 10, 1910; A Reformatory which Reforms, *Outlook,* Feb. 5, 1910.
2. The Caste Spirit: its origin and its evils. See the *Church Missionary Review,* Sept., 1908.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Give your pupils the subjects for written work to be brought to class next Sunday. See page 253.

Have them record this lesson in their Note Books, as they have been doing from week to week.

LESSON XIII—JUNE 30.

REVIEW

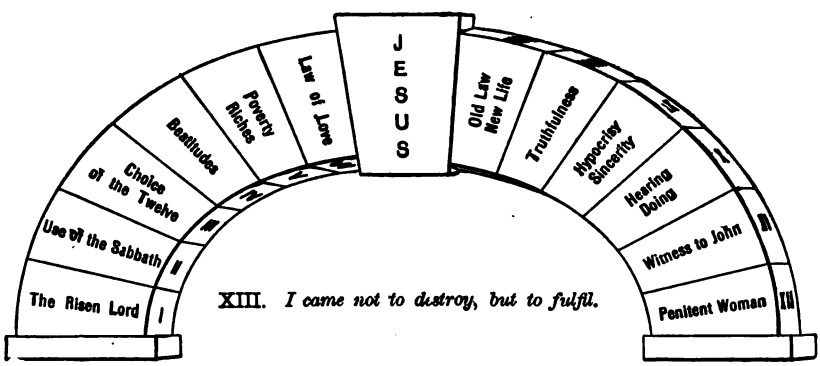
Golden Text

I am not come to destroy,
but to fulfil. Matt. 5.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Isa. 2.2-4; 11.1-10. Missionary Lesson. (Or, 1 Cor. 15.1-11. The Appearances of the Risen Lord.) **T.** Mark 2.23—3.6. The Use of the Sabbath. Mark 3.7-19; Matt. 5.13-16. The Appointment of the Twelve. **W.** Matt. 5.1-12. The Beatitudes. Luke 6.20-26; 16.19-31. Poverty and Riches. **T.** Luke 6.27-38; Rom. 13.8-10. The Law of Love. Matt. 5.17-26. The Old Law and the New Life. **F.** Matt. 5.33-37; Jas. 3.1-12; 5.12. Truthfulness. Matt. 6.1-18. Hypocrisy and Sincerity. Or, Acts 2.1-11. The Gift of the Holy Spirit. **S.** Luke 6.39-49. Hearing and Doing. Matt. 11.2-19. Christ's Witness to John the Baptist. **S.** Luke 7.36-50. The Penitent Woman. Or, Eph. 5.11-21. Temperance Lesson. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

REVIEWS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

This review may be conducted by twelve persons besides the leader. Have the arch drawn upon the blackboard beforehand. Let the leader call for the Subject and Golden Text of the first lesson, and then write "The Risen Lord" in the first block, and on another part of the board the outline for the first lesson, given below. Then let the one appointed give a three-minute talk upon that



lesson. Great variety in the twelve lesson "talks" can be obtained, for one may give a telling illustration, another may draw out the story by apt questions, a third may recite a poem that enforces the lesson thought, a fourth may give a graphic word picture, a fifth may sing a song whose words apply to the lesson, etc. A bell tap should stop each speaker when his time is up, or the review may become too long.

I. **P**aul reached that **C**hrist crucified was **R**aised and recognized.

II. On the Sabbath **M**ade for man it is lawful to **D**o good deeds.

III. The **W**orker at work. The **C**all of the chosen. The **L**ight of the land.

IV. Blessed are the **L**owly, **L**amenting, **L**ong-suffering, **L**onging; **P**itying, **P**ure, **P**eacemakers, **P**ersecuted.

V. The **A**dvantages of Adversity. The **W**oe of Wealth. The **P**rofit of Poverty. The **L**esson of Lazarus.

VI. The **L**aw of Love says What you would have others **D**o to you, Do to them.

VII. The old **L**aw requires **M**uch, The new Life fulfils More.

VIII. **S**peak the truth, Stumble not in word, Swear not.

IX. True and false **P**hilanthropy, **P**rayer, **P**ractice.

X. Another's **L**ittle mote, Thy **L**arger beam. **P**ractice vs. Profession.

XI. Christ's **A**nswer to, Acknowledgment of John.

XII. The **L**oving, Loveless **P**enitent, Pharisee.

2. Call for the Golden Text for the Quarter, and write it upon the board. Then call for the sentence from the first lesson and for the chief persons and chief fact, and write them upon the board. Twelve classes, one for each lesson, should be appointed the week before to come prepared to give these statements.

Golden Text for the Quarter. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.

I. He hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.

II. The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath.

III. He calleth unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him.

IV. He opened his mouth and taught them.

V. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

VI. But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies.

VII. Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.

VIII. Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all.

IX. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

X. The disciple is not above his teacher: but every one when he is perfected shall be as his teacher.

XI. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come.

XII. Who is this that even forgiveth sins?

	Chief Persons	Chief Fact
I.	Jesus, Paul, Peter, Five Hundred, James, Apostles.	A Great Resurrection.
II.	Pharisee, Disciples, Jesus.	A Great Day.

III.	Jesus, Apostles.	A Great Appointment.
IV.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Sermon.
V.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Parable.
VI.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Rule.
VII.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Anger.
VIII.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Member.
IX.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Prayer.
X.	Jesus, Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Foundation.
XI.	Jesus, John's Disciples, Multitudes.	A Great Witness.
XII.	Jesus, Simon the Pharisee, Penitent Woman.	A Great Forgiveness.

A REVIEW FOR LITTLE FOLKS

Have the pictures on the next page copied upon your blackboard, or upon a piece of cardboard large enough to be readily seen by all in the class. Each square should be covered with a square of paper fastened on with paste or pin or thumb-tack. Remove one paper at a time and question your pupils about the lesson which the picture recalls.

A REVIEW FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

See directions on page 137.

I. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about Jesus Christ, telling them that Christ ... for our ... according to the scriptures: that he was ...; and that he arose on the ... day, and was seen alive afterwards by ..., then by the ..., by about ..., by James, and last of all by ... .

II. One Sabbath day Jesus and his ... were going through the ... and his disciples ... and ... the ears. The Pharisees said this was not ... on the .... Jesus reminded them that ... when he was hungry did a thing which was contrary to the law, for he entered the ... and ate the ... . Then Jesus said, the ... was made for ... and not ... for the .... After Jesus ... a man with a ... hand on the ..., the Pharisees and Herodians planned to ... him.

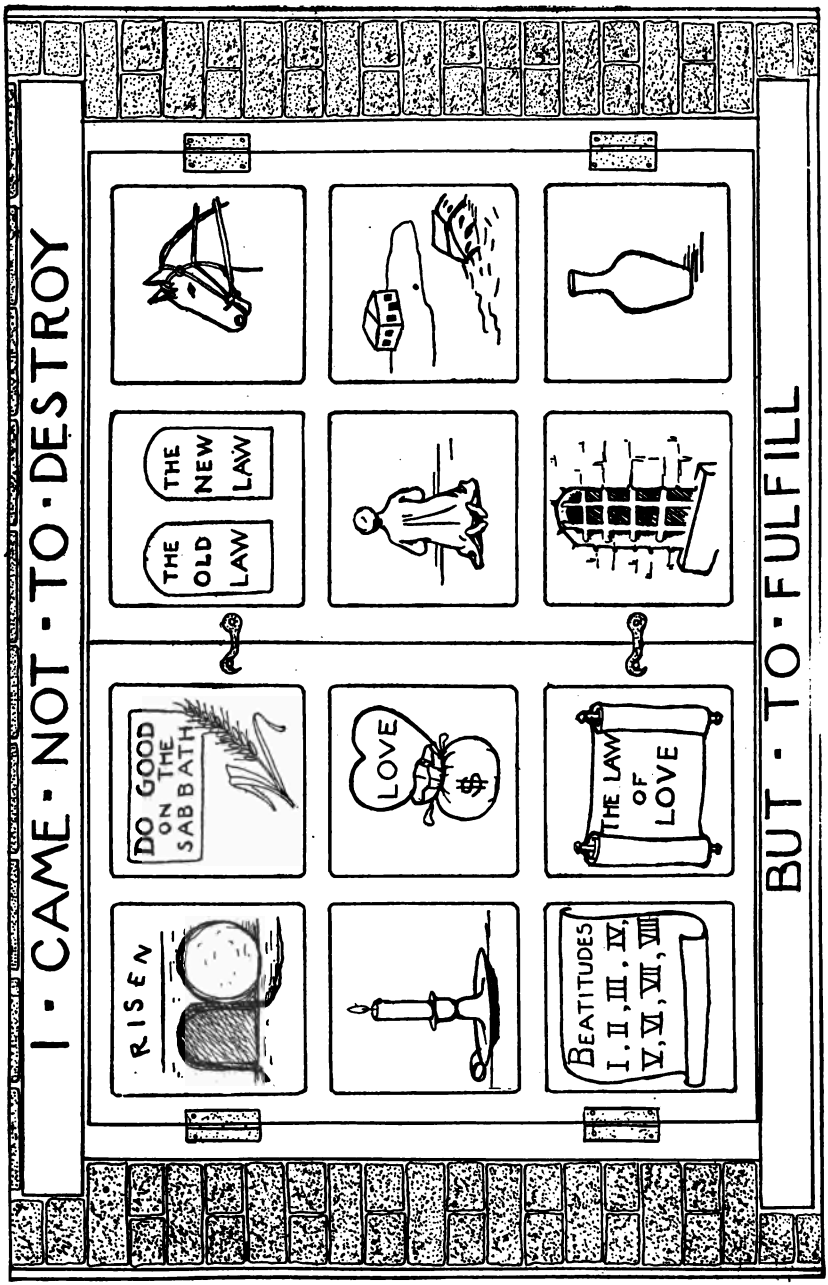
III. Jesus chose ... disciples that they might be with him and that he might send them forth to ... The names of the ... are these: First two pairs of brother, ... and ..., and ... and ... . Then ... and ..., ... and ..., ... the son of Alphæus, and ... and ... the Cananæan, and ... who ... him. You are the ... of the earth, the ... of the world, he told them. Let your ... shine before ..., that they may see your good ... and ... your ... who is in ...

IV. Blessed are they that ... said Jesus; for they shall be .... Blessed are the ... for they shall ... the earth. Blessed are they that ... and ... after ... for they shall be .... Blessed are the ... for they shall obtain .... Blessed are the ... in heart; for they shall see .... Blessed are the ... for they shall be called ... of God. Blessed are they that have been ... for ... sake, for theirs is the ... of heaven.

V. Now there was a certain ... man, clothed in ... and fine ... at whose gate a beggar named ... lay who wished to be fed with the ... that fell from the ... man's table. Both died. In Hades the ... man saw ... afar off and he cried to ..., beseeching him to send ... to cool his ... But ... said, Son ... that in thy lifetime thou hadst the ... and he ... the evil, and how he is ... and thou art in .... Besides, none may ... from here to thee. And when Dives asked ... to send ... to warn his ..., ... said that if they would not hear ... and the ..., they would not be persuaded, if one ... from the dead.

VI. Love your ..., do good to them that ... you. To him that ... thee on the one cheek ... also the .... As you ... that men should ... to you, ... ye also to ... likewise. Be ye ..., even as your Father is ... And ... not, and ye shall not be ... Give and it shall be ... unto you, good ..., pressed down, ... together, ... over. For with what ... ye mete it shall be ... to you again.

Owe no man anything, save to ... one another. The commandments are summed up in this word, Thou shalt ... thy ... as .... Love ... no ... to ... love therefore is the ... of the law.


I · CAME · NOT · TO · DESTROY
RISEN
DO GOOD ON THE SABBATH
THE OLD LAW
THE NEW LAW
LOVE
BEATITUDES I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII
THE LAW OF LOVE
BUT · TO · FULFILL

VII. Think not that I came to ... the law or the ...: I came not to ..., but to ... I say unto you, that except your ... exceed the ... of the scribes and ..., ye shall in no wise ... into the kingdom of heaven.

It was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not .... But I say unto you, that ... and ... words are also worthy of punishment.

VIII. Swear not at all. Stumble not in ... The ... is a little ... and ... great things. How much ... is ... by how small a fire! And the ... is a fire. With the ... we ... the Father and with it ... men. These things ... not so to be. Above all things, ... not.

IX. Take heed that ye do not your ... before ... to be ... of them. When thou doest ... sound not the ... before thee. When thou ... alms, let not thy ... hand know what thy ... hand doeth.

And when thou ..., enter into thine ... chamber and having shut the ..., pray to thy ... who is in .... And in ... use not vain ... as the Gentiles do. Your Father ... what things ye have need of, before ye ... him. After this manner pray: Our ... who art in ..., ... be thy .... Thy ... come. Thy ... be done, as in ..., so on .... Give us this ... our daily .... And ... us our ... as we also have ... our .... And bring us not into ... but ... us from the ... one.

X. Can the ... lead the ...? Shall they not ... fall into a pit? And why beholdest thou the ... that is in thy brother's ..., and considerest not the ... that is in thine ... eye? Thou hypocrite, ... out ... the ... out of thine own ..., and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the...that is in thy...eye. Each tree is known by its .... For of thorns men do not gather ..., nor of a ... bush gather they .... And why call ye me, ..., ... and ... not the things which I say? He that heareth my words and ... them is like a man building a ... who digged ... and laid a ... upon the ... When the ... arose, the stream could not ... it. But he that ... and ... not, is like a man that built a ... upon the ... without a ...: against which the ... brake and it ... and the ... of that ... was ...

XI. John the ... sent his ... to Jesus to ... him: Art thou he that ..., or look we for ...? Go and ... John, said Jesus, the things which ye ... and ...: the ... receive their ..., the ... walk, the ... are cleansed, the ... hear, the ... are raised up, and the ... have the good ... preached to them. To the multitudes Jesus said that John was much more than a prophet, that among men there was no ... than he, yet he that is but ... in the ... is greater than John. And then he added that his generation was like ... sitting in the ... place who called to others and complained: We ... unto you, and ye did not ..., we wailed, and ye did not ... For John came neither ... nor ... and they say, he hath a ... The Son of man came ... and ... and they say, Behold a ... of publicans and ...!

XII. At a ... in the home of a ..., a woman who had been a ... entered and pouring ... from an ... cruse on the ... of Jesus, ... them with her .... The Pharisees found fault with this and Jesus said to him: A certain ... had two ...: the one owed him ... shillings and the other .... He forgave both. Which will ... most? The Pharisee answered, He to whom he ... most. Then Jesus said: Thou gavest me no ... for my feet, no ..., no ... for my head, but this ... has ... my feet with her ... and wiped them with her ..., and anointed them with ... Wherefore I say unto thee, Her ... which are many, are ... for she ... much, but to whom ... is forgiven, the same ... little. And then he said to the woman, Thy ... are ... Who is this, the people questioned, that even ... sins?

A REVIEW OF MEMORIZED VERSES

1. About the sabbath.
2. About the disciples as salt and as light.
5. About the pure in heart.
6. About the treatment of enemies.
7. About judging.
8. About giving.
9. About owing.
3. About the purpose of letting one's light shine.
4. About the persecuted.
13. About speaking the truth.
14. About hypocrisy.
15. About almsgiving.
16. About praying.
17. About forgiving.

10. About loving.
11. About the old law and the new life.
12. About the righteousness of the scribes.
18. About criticising.
19. About the proof of goodness.
20. About hearing and not doing.

A REVIEW BY MEANS OF ALLUSIONS

The old order changeth, yielding place to the new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways. *Tennyson.*

Love does not say "What must I do?" but rather, "What may I do?" and the whole of life will not be regarded as occasion large enough for giving proof of his love by the one who knows he is much forgiven. *J. Stuart Holden.*

Putting fear and hesitancy far from us, let us gird ourselves with the joyful strength of assured victory. The work is done before we begin it. The strong man is bound; what remains is but the spoiling of his house. *Alexander Maclaren.*

It is not enough for the preacher to tell us the pattern of the hem of Christ's garment. He must touch it, and he must speak to us with the glad enthusiasm of one who has been healed by the touch. *John E. McFadyen.*

The ancient Jews were more concerned about saving institutions than about saving life. Jesus' concern was and is for life. Wine-skins, institutions, phrases, are all for the wine of life and life itself. *W. F. McDowell.*

The disciples seem to have been more concerned about getting the beams out of their own eyes in order to see clearly when casting motes out of the eyes of others, than about mastering the philosophies of the day and the various dialects in which the scriptures were contained. *J. D. Hammond.*

Can the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter? Yet religion does it. For religion is simply life motived by visions of God. When the visions are bad, they are like electricity gone mad, driving toward death; when good, they are like electricity well-harnessed, magnificent in blessing. *Henry Emerson Fosdick.*

Book and church and day are given
For man, not God; for earth, not heaven. *Whittier.*

Many people think that their lives are rock-founded because they have a nebulous admiration for the moral teachings of Jesus. *Henry F. Cope.*

O thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way;
The path of prayer thyself hast trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray! *James Montgomery.*

Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves. For if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. *Shakespeare.*

"'I do not see thee, God!' a soul made plaint;
'O for an angel hand to tear the veil apart;
Hide not from me thy face, I strive, I faint!'
The silence whispered, 'Art thou pure in heart?'"

To realize that we are risen with Christ lends to all life a sanctifying force which manifests itself in every sphere and realm. *Hugh Black.*

QUESTIONS FOR LITTLE FOLKS

1. What happened on the first Easter?
2. Who were Jesus' twelve disciples?
3. Tell what a woman did to Jesus at a feast and what Jesus did for her.
4. What did Jesus say about two men who built houses on different foundations?
5. What did he say that it was right to do on the Sabbath?
6. What did Jesus say about letting one's light shine?

7. What did he say about loving others?
8. What is the Golden Rule?
9. Recite the Beatitudes.
10. Recite the Lord's Prayer.

QUESTIONS FOR AN ORAL OR A WRITTEN REVIEW

For Younger Pupils.

1. In what chapters of what book is the Sermon on the Mount found?
2. Where in the Bible are the Beatitudes found?
3. Jean Ingelow once exclaimed: I am athirst for God, the living God. What Beatitude applied to her?
4. Where in the Bible is the Lord's Prayer given?
5. What did Jesus tell his disciples was their mission?
6. What did Jesus teach about the keeping of the Sabbath?
7. Tell the illustration given by Jesus which shows two ways of building a life.
8. Tell the parable of the Two Debtors.
9. What fault did the Pharisees find with the disciples and how did their Master defend them?
10. What is the Christian way of treating one who wrongs you?
11. What rule did Jesus give to measure actions by?
12. What words did Jesus speak against pretence in religion?
13. What did he say about trying to show off one's goodness?
14. What did Jesus teach about prayers not always being true prayers?
15. What did Jesus say is the danger of riches?
16. How did Jesus say that deeds, not words, are the test of religion?
17. Why is it wicked to swear?
18. What motive in giving did Jesus rebuke?
19. What motive in praying did Jesus rebuke?
20. What is the difference between a hypocrite and a genuine Christian?
21. Which are the Synoptic Gospels?
22. How do the Synoptic Gospels differ from the Gospel according to John?
23. What are the chief teachings of Matthew that are not found in the other Gospels?
24. For whom was Matthew written?
25. For whom was Mark written?

For Older Pupils.

1. Where is the Sermon on the Mount given?
2. What was the ideal of character which Jesus gave his disciples in this Sermon?
3. Where is the Lord's Prayer given?
4. Where are the Beatitudes recorded?
5. What privileges and blessings have members of the Kingdom of God?
6. What responsibilities and duties have members of the Kingdom of God?
7. In what respects must members of the Kingdom differ from the Pharisees?
8. Give a dozen characteristics of members of the Kingdom of Heaven.
9. What was John the Baptist's purpose in sending the message he did to Jesus? How did Jesus reply?
10. What was Jesus' opinion of John the Baptist?
11. How did Jesus' teaching differ from that of the scribes? Give examples.
12. What did Jesus say about judging?
13. What did he say about witnessing?
14. What did he say about resisting evil?
15. Against what forms of insincere display did Jesus warn his disciples?
16. How do the commandments of Jesus compare with those of the Mosaic law?
17. What sins of thought did Jesus condemn?
18. What sins of Pharisaism did Jesus condemn?
19. What does Paul say about the tongue?
20. What lesson did Jesus teach at Matthew's feast?
21. At Simon's feast?

22. What is the last warning given in the Sermon on the Mount?
23. Says Channing: True religion blends itself with common life: we are to draw nigh to God without forsaking men. What incident of our lessons shows Jesus' custom?
24. As when a spark scarce seen will set blaze the illimitable forest. What lesson do these words from the Iliad recall?
25. What are the chief differences between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel?
26. What great addresses, incidents, and parables are found only in Matthew?

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN WORK TO BE BROUGHT TO CLASS

For Younger Pupils.

1. Name the twelve disciples and tell something about the most important ones.
2. Write an account of a Sunday well spent.
3. Tell the story of a man who tried to patronize Jesus.
4. Tell the story of the wise and the foolish builders.
5. Tell what you have learned about the Gospel according to Matthew.
6. According to Mark.

For Older Pupils.

1. A summary of the Sermon on the Mount.
2. Matthew's and Luke's record of the Sermon on the Mount compared and contrasted.
3. The teaching of Jesus about the Sabbath contrasted with that of the Pharisees.
4. The fault found with Jesus and his defense.
5. A study of John the Baptist.
6. A characterization of the chief disciples.
7. The Gospel according to Matthew.
8. The Gospel according to Mark.
9. The Synoptic Gospels.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What miracle was the immediate occasion of the Pharisees' words, as told in Matthew's Gospel? (Mt. 12.22.) 2. What did the people think of Jesus' power? (Mt. 12.23.) 3. What other argument beside that of vv. 24-26 did Jesus use? (Mt. 12.27.) 4. Did the Pharisees believe their own slanderous words? (Jn. 9.41.) 5. What is blasphemy? (Dictionary.) 6. Who were the human brothers of Jesus? (Mt. 13.55.) 7. Did they believe that he was the Messiah? (Jn. 7.5.) 8. Had he sisters? (Mt. 13.56.) 9. When Jesus removed from Nazareth to Capernaum, what members of his family went with him? (Jn. 2.12.) 10. Where did his sisters stay? (Mk. 6.3.) 11. When did they know the truth about Jesus, as told in the first chapter of the Acts?

Questions to think about. 1. Recall all the things that have been said against Jesus in the lessons thus far studied. 2. What three sayings of to-day's lesson must be added to that list? 3. Make an outline of the lesson. 4. What admission is made by the Pharisees in their charge? (That Jesus had more than human power.) 5. How did Jesus prove the charge of the Pharisees absurd? 6. What lesson of last year illustrated Jesus' words about the division of forces bringing about a kingdom's downfall? (Division of Solomon's Kingdom.) 7. How did Abraham Lincoln use in a famous speech the figure of a house divided against itself? (Clipping, p. 255.) 8. What is meant by "an eternal sin"? 9. What is the eternal sin? (Clipping, p. 258.) 10. I knew a Christian woman who grieved over the fear that she had committed "the eternal sin," "the unpardonable sin," till she became insane. What proof did she give that she was guiltless of that sin? 11. Is there a difference between not being understood and being misunderstood? 12. Mention several great men who have been called "beside themselves," or "mad."

THIRD QUARTER

LESSON I—JULY 7

MALIGNANT UNBELIEF

Golden Text

This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. John 3.19

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 3.20-35. Malignant Unbelief. **T.** Matt. 13.54-58. Power of Unbelief. **W.** Gen. 3.1-8. Unbelief the Cause of the Fall. **T.** Num. 14.1-12. Unbelief the Cause of Rebellion. **F.** Isa. 30.8-17. Unbelief the Cause of Destruction. **S.** John 3.14-21. Supreme Curse of Unbelief. **S.** John 14.6-14. Power of Faith. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 3.20-35 COMMIT vv 28, 29

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much
as eat bread. 21 And when his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold
on him: for they said, He is beside himself. 22 And the scribes that came
down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and, By the prince of the demons
casteth he out the demons. 23 And he called them unto him, and said unto
them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 And if a kingdom be
divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house be
divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 And if Satan
hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an
end. 27 But no one can enter into the house of the strong *man,* and spoil his
goods, except he first bind the strong *man;* and then he will spoil his house.
28 Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of
men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: 29 but
whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but
is guilty of an eternal sin: 30 because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.
31 And there come his mother and his brethren; and, standing without, they
sent unto him, calling him. 32 And a multitude was sitting about him; and
they say unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.
33 And he answereth them, and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren?
34 And looking round on them that sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my
mother and my brethren! 35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same
is my brother, and sister, and mother.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

20-22. *Cometh together again.* An earlier occasion is told in 2.1.—*Not so much as eat bread.* They were in a house, v. 19, probably that of Peter.—*His friends.* Those of his own household.—*To lay hold on him.* To put him under guard. A man's foes shall be they of his own household, Mt. 10.36.—*He is beside himself.* He is out of his mind. "With their small ideas of things, they could not otherwise account for his conduct." Compare Jn. 7.5, 20, 41, 48, 52; 8.48, 52.—*Beelzebub.* Greek, *Beelzebul,* RVm. In 2 K. 1.2 the name is given as Baalzebub, the god of Ekron: here the name stands for the devil, "perhaps meaning 'the master of the house' of the demons."—*By.* Or, *in,* RVm.—*The prince of demons.* Satan, v. 23. Since they cannot deny the reality of the healing, they ascribe the power that wrought it to the prince of demons.—*Demons.* See p. 105.

23-26. *Satan.* This is the Hebrew word: from the Latin word *diabolos* comes our word *devil. Parables.* See page 265. *How can Satan cast out Satan?* It

would be remarkably foolish for Satan to cast out a demon, one of his messengers, verse 22. Compare the proverb, "Hawks do not pick out hawks' eyes." —*That kingdom cannot stand.* His hearers would recall the division of Solomon's Kingdom.—*House.* Household.

27. The argument is that as one must first overpower and bind a strong man before he can enter and spoil his goods, so Jesus must have first conquered the prince of demons before he could cast out demons that possessed men.

28. *All their sins shall be forgiven.* Provided of course, that they repent.—*Blasphemies.* Impiously irreverent words or signs addressed to, or used in reference to, God; also, the act of claiming the attributes or prerogatives of deity (*Webster*).

29. *Hath never forgiveness.* Matthew adds here: Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him. The Son of man accepts that as part of his experience, Dr. A. B. Bruce explains: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is another matter altogether; it is to speak against Christ, or against any other servant of God, not under misapprehension, but knowing full well that they are the agents of the divine spirit.—*Is guilty of an eternal sin.* A sin whose effects would last eternally. The sin consisted in saying, He hath an unclean spirit, as v. 30 explains. "The Holy Spirit is the divine Agent in revealing God's heart and will. To blaspheme him is unforgivable because the soul which can recognize God's revelation of himself in all his goodness and moral perfection, and be stirred only to hatred thereby, has reached a dreadful climax of hardness, and has ceased to be capable of being influenced by his beseeching. It has passed beyond the possibility of penitence and acceptance of forgiveness. Practically, hardened and permanent unbelief, conjoined with malicious hatred of the only means of forgiveness, is the unforgivable sin. Fear that the sin has been committed is proof positive that it has not; for, if it have been, there will be no relenting in enmity, nor any wish for deliverance" (*Maclaren*).

31-35. *And there come.* The evangelist, having left, as it were, the Saviour's kinsfolks on the road between Nazareth and Capernaum (verse 21), rejoins them on their arrival (*Morrison*).—*His brethren.* There were four "brethren," James, Joseph, Simon, Judas, and several sisters, Mt. 13.55, 56.—*Sent unto him.* They could not enter the house, Mt. 12.46, because of the dense crowd, Lk. 8.19. After the resurrection they were among his devoted followers, Acts 1.14.—*The same is my brother, and sister, and mother.* Spiritually akin to him.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

25. *If a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.* In his famous verbal duel with Stephen A. Douglas about the question of slavery, Abraham Lincoln quoted these words of Jesus and said: "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved, I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." To this day Lincoln's speech is called "The House-Divided-Against-Itself Speech."

31. *There came to him his mother and his brethren.* It is wholly probable from the record that they had free access to him ordinarily when they were where he was. Why this unexpected breaking in while he is at work? It looks very much as though the leaders of the Jews had been cunningly working upon Mary's mother heart. They would use her influence to side-track him. Surely such a fine-grained Man as he clearly is will be open to his mother's influence and to her fears and wishes. It was an appeal to a natural love. It touched the tenderest earthly tie our Master had. Only so can his words in reply to the request be fully understood, "Who is my mother?" and so forth. He evidently recognized the interruption as something serious. His reply in effect is this: "My mission is not subject to earthly human ties, even though as tender as that of a mother. My relation to my Father's will is the one controlling purpose and passion of my life." *S. D. Gordon,* in *Quiet Talks About the Tempter.*

31. *His mother.* Christian art has misled the sentiment of the devout, and

has pictured the mother of Jesus as continuously aware of his profoundest hopes, from the time of his boyhood, when she "pondered these things in her heart," to the time of the Cross, when she stood near by, leaning on the disciple whom Jesus loved. The fact is, however, that in many glimpses of the domestic relations of Jesus we see him separated from an undiscerning, if not an alienated, home. When his parents find their boy in the temple, they keep his sayings indeed in their hearts, but they do not open their minds to those sayings. On the contrary, it is written that "They understood not the saying which he spake unto them." Even when his teaching had gained many other followers, his own kin had no ears for his message. What infinite pathos is in that scene at Capernaum, when his mother and brethren cannot "come at him for the press!" They come, it is plain, to take him from the dangers which beset him. Perhaps they see the political peril that threatens him; perhaps they lament his break with the sacred law; perhaps they even doubt his sanity. At any rate, they come, not to listen, but to deter. *Professor Francis G. Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Church.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

22. *Beelzebub...Beelzebul* is unquestionably the proper form of the name. The name was probably derived from Baal-zebul, the Fly-god of Ekron (2 K. 1.2, 3, 6, 16), but there is doubt as to the reason for changing the last letter and for applying the name to Satan. Flies are often so terrible a plague in the East that we need not be surprised to find one of the forms under which Baal was worshipped to be Baal-zebul, Baal of the fly, or Lord of the fly; the Septuagint makes it Baal-fly. So one of the Greek titles of Zeus (Jupiter) was "he who drives off the flies." It would be very natural for the later Jews to express their abhorrence of the Philistine idol by using his name for Satan. The change of the last letter may have been merely euphonic. *Dr. John A. Broadus,* in *Commentary on Matthew.*

22. *By the prince of the demons casteth he out the demons.* Dr. Geikie, in His Life of Christ, suggests that the rabbis had no little gain from their exorcisms, and were jealous of Jesus' wonderful power over the "demon-possessed." They used, he says, adjurations, spells, and magic formulæ, which were dangerously like the superstitions of the despised heathens. They laid stress on their knowledge of the secret names of God and the angels. To utter the cipher which stood for these, was in their belief to set in motion the divine and angelic powers themselves; and a whole science of the black art had been invented, defining how and for what ends they could be pressed into the service of their invoker, like the genii of the Arabian Nights into that of the magician. Possessing spells so mighty, as they believed the secret names of the higher powers thus to be, the rabbis had created a vast science of magic as fantastic as that of medieval superstition, to bring these awful powers to bear on the mysteries of the future and the diseases and troubles of the present. Combinations of numbers of lines, or of letters based on them, were believed to put these powers at the service of the seer or the exorcist. Resistless talismans, protecting amulets, frightful curses, by which miracles could be wrought, the sick healed, and demons put to flight, were thus formed. Armed with a mystic text from the opening of Genesis or the visions of Ezekiel, or the secret name of God, or of some of the angels, or with secret, mysterious unions of letters, the rabbis who dealt in the dark arts had the power to draw the moon from the heaven, or to open the abysses of the earth!

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The opposition to Jesus of the leaders of the Jews we have traced from their first suspicions and muttering "within themselves" to their outspoken anger, open attacks, and secret plottings for his assassination. They had followed him to Galilee, openly accusing him of blasphemy in declaring the forgiveness of sins, of violating the Sabbath regulations and of not keeping the fast days, of associating with publicans and sinners, of being gluttonous and a wine-bibber. Our lesson to-day brings the culminating charge, that of being in league with Satan. What the outcome would be Jesus well knew, yet he

abated not one whit his exposure of their hypocrisy and continued his declarations of the difference between their righteousness and that of members of the Kingdom of God. The coming of his kinsfolks with intent to forcibly restrain him follows.

When early in his public ministry Jesus had removed from Nazareth to Capernaum, he was accompanied by his mother, brothers, and disciples (Jn. 2.12). At this time his sisters were probably married and settled in Nazareth, for at a later time we learn that they were still residing in Nazareth (Mk. 6.3). The events of to-day's lesson occurred at Capernaum, in the autumn of A. D. 28. Review paragraphs 155-157 and study paragraphs 66-71, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Can you recall what were the bitterest moments of your own childhood? Were they not the times when you felt yourself unjustly treated, when you knew that you did not deserve reprimand for conduct that had been the result of good motives, and yet you felt utterly helpless, unable to explain those motives? Your pupils all know the bitter moments of feeling themselves misunderstood, they can enter into the feeling which Jesus must have had when his mother and his brothers misunderstood him. Make the first scene of your lesson, verses 20-21, very real. Then, omitting verses 23-30, describe the second scene and explain what Jesus meant. Adapt the Third Topic.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. By questions review the earlier lessons in which the opposition of the Pharisees has been seen. See the Historical Background.

For Older Pupils. Our lesson has several "difficult sayings." Into how many topics may it be divided? (Write on the board this outline, secured from your pupils by questioning them.)

I. The Occasion, 20.
II. The Charges, 21, 22.
  1. Of his friends, 21.
  2. Of his enemies, 22.
III. Christ's Answer, 23-30.
  1. The Absurdity of the Pharisees' Charge, 23-27.
  2. "The Unpardonable Sin," 28-30.
IV. Natural and Spiritual Kindred of Jesus, 31-35.
  1. The Demand of his Mother and Brothers, 31, 32.
  2. The Reply of Jesus, 34, 35.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I MISUNDERSTOOD

He is beside himself. The most pathetic life in the history of the world is the life of the Lord Jesus. Those who study it find out, every day, a fresh sorrow. Before he came it was already foretold that he would be acquainted with grief, but no imagination had ever conceived the darkness of the reality.

We are confronted here with an episode in his life which had a bitterness all its own. It was not the way the world treated him; it was not the Pharisees; it was not something which came from his enemies; it was something his friends did. When he left the carpenter's shop and went out into the wider life, his friends were watching him. For some time back they had remarked a certain strangeness in his manner. He had always been strange among his brothers, but now this was growing upon him. He has said much stranger things of late, made many strange plans, gone away on curious errands to strange places. What did it mean? Where was it to end? Were the family to be responsible for all this eccentricity? One sad day it culminated. It was quite clear to them now. He was not responsible for what he was doing. It was his mind, alas! that had become affected. He was beside himself. In plain English, he was mad! It was his own mother, perhaps, and his brethren,

who pointed this terrible finger at him; apologising for him, entreating the people never to mind him, he was beside himself—he was mad.

Observe, from the world's standpoint, the charge is true. It is useless to denounce this as a libel, a bitter, blasphemous calumny. It is not so—it is true. There was no alternative. Either he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, or he was beside himself. A holy life is always a phenomenon. The world knoweth it not. It is either supernatural or morbid.

For what is being beside oneself? What is madness? It is eccentricity—ec-centr-icity—having a different centre from other people.

Here is an engine with many moving wheels, large and small, cogged and plain, but each revolving upon a central axis, and describing a perfect circle. But at one side there is one small wheel which does not turn in a circle. Its motion is different from all the rest, and the changing curve it describes is unlike any ordinary line of the mathematician. The engineer tells you that this is *the eccentric,* because it has a peculiar centre.

Now when Jesus Christ came among men he found them nearly all revolving in one circle. There was but one centre to human life—self. Man's chief end was to glorify himself and enjoy himself for ever. By the whole gravitation of society, Jesus—as a man—must have been drawn to the very verge of this vast vortex of self-indulgence. But he stepped back. He refused absolutely to be attracted. He put everything out of his life that had even a temptation in it to the world's centre. He humbled himself—there is no place in the world's vortex for humbleness. He became of no reputation—nor for namelessness. He emptied himself—gravitation cannot act on emptiness. So the prince of this world came, but found nothing in him. He found nothing, because the true centre of that life was not to be seen. It was with God. The unseen and the eternal moved him. He did not seek his own happiness, but that of others. He went about doing good. His object in going about was not gain, but to do good.

Now all this was very eccentric. It was living on new lines altogether. He did God's will. He pleased not himself. His centre was to one side of self. He was beside himself. From the world's view-point it was simply madness. Condensed from *The Ideal Life* by *Professor Henry Drummond.*

No one knoweth the Son, save the Father. Blade of grass stands close to blade of grass, but peak is sundered from peak by miles of intervening valley; and here was One who towered above all the rest, and was solitary accordingly. What but like can comprehend like? And since there was none like Jesus, who could comprehend him? He might bend down to their level; but could they rise to his? He might eat and drink with them; could they joy and sorrow with him? "After all," he must have asked himself—and the thought may have struck through him even while the multitudes were pressing round him—"who out of all these knows me? Who can share my innermost thoughts and feelings? Not one." "No one knoweth the Son—" Yes, One, but no finite mind; God knew him, and only the Father *could* know the Son. *J. Warschauer,* in *The Secret of the Son.*

Others who have been beside themselves. Remember that charges like these, in all the various keys of contempt or of pity, or of fierce hostility, have been cast against all innovators, against every man that has broken a new path; against all teachers that have cut themselves apart from tradition and encrusted formulas; against every man that has waged war with the conventionalisms of society: against all idealists who have dreamed dreams and seen visions; against every man that has been touched with a lofty enthusiasm of any sort; and most of all, against all to whom God and their relations to him, the spiritual world and their relations to it, the future life and their relations to that, have become dominant forces and motives in their lives. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *St. Mark.*

II Soul Suicide

Loving Darkness rather than Light. The sin is unpardonable in the sense that there is nothing which can break through to reach the conscience. Conscience is perverted to use on the wrong side. Somewhere along the line the choice of evil is deliberate to such an extent that the subsequent choices pass

into the automatic and spontaneous stage. Then what chance is there of doing anything with the man?

A distinguished essayist has recently told us of the most terrible remark he ever heard. He once knew a man who deliberately chose evil instead of good and who rejoiced in the evil. One day this man had an opportunity to commit a deadly sin. He meditated over the chance and finally seemed attracted to sin by this argument: "If I do that, I shall not longer be able to tell good from evil." This is the supreme sin, not that it often comes in so critical a form as in the case that the essayist mentions, but because it makes for the absolute deadness of the moral life.

The word spoken to the Pharisees was one of warning. Christ did not necessarily mean that the Pharisees had already reached this stage, but he sought to warn them of the possibility. They may have been crying out against Christ because of their impotent wrath. They may not have really meant what they said. Let us trust that none ever reach this stage. Let us hope that every man on the path to the state of unpardonable sin may yield to the grace of God before the condition becomes irrevocable. *Dr. Francis J. McConnell,* in *Sunday-school Journal.*

An Illustration from Nature. As long as a man has the power to repent and the disposition to do it, there is no sin that will put him beyond the pale of God's forgiveness. But it is a law of nature that if a man will not do a thing he shall not do it, because the time is bound to come when he cannot do it. Take a rope and tie your arm to your side and simply leave that rope there long enough, refusing to use that organ for the purpose God gave it to you, and the time will come when you will have lost forever the capacity to lift that arm again. Put a bandage on your eye and simply leave it there long enough—you need not puncture the eye; or put a stopper in your ear—you need not puncture the drum, simply leave the stopper there long enough, neglecting and refusing to use that organ for the purpose God gave it to you, and the time will come when your ear will have lost forever the capacity to hear. Harden your heart long enough, refusing to use it for the purpose God gave it to you, and the time will come when your heart will have lost forever the capacity to feel and believe. "Therefore, they could not believe." *Dr. William E. Biederwolf,* on *The Unpardonable Sin.*

Whittier's Words. Whittier wrote within a twelve-month of his death: "I do believe that we take with us into the next world the same freedom of will as we have here, and that *there,* as *here,* he that turns to the Lord will find mercy; that God never ceases to follow his creatures with love, and is always ready to hear the prayer of the penitent. But I also believe that *now* is the accepted time, and that he who dallies with sin may find the chains of evil habit too strong to break in this world or the other." And the following is the poet's verse:

Though God be good and free be Heaven,
  No force divine can love compel:
And, though the song of sins forgiven
  May sound through lowest hell,
The sweet persuasion of his voice
  Respects thy sanctity of will.
He giveth day: thou hast thy choice
  To walk in darkness still.

The Great Texts of the Bible.

How the most Hardened Sinner may avoid Soul Suicide.

Ben-Midrash, a Gardener of Capernaum. Didst thou not say that men can not gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles? Lo! I have raised grapes that grow on thorns. What sayest thou? Art thou truly the prophet, and hast thou truly been sent by God?

Jesus. Ben-Midrash, thou hast done well to graft the vine upon the thorn of thy vineyard. Thou askest me whether I am a true prophet. Observe what I am doing. I do the same unto man that thou hast done unto the thorn. David cried to the Lord, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." As noble plants can be grafted upon the thorn, so can the divine spirit be grafted into the heart. My work is to engraft purity and righteousness

into the souls of men. Thy thorn has ceased to be a thorn: it hath become a vine. Briers and brambles of bitterness are the harvest of thy heart. Why dost thou not do the same to thy heart that thou hast done with the thorn? Plant the word of truth within thy soul, and it will bring forth the sweet grapes of divine grace, of righteousness, and of love.

Ben-Midrash. What is my soul but a thorn? Prune thou its prickly branches and graft thy soul in mine. From *The Crown of Thorns,* by *Paul Carus.*

III Kinship with Christ

Children of the King. Among them that are born of woman there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist, Jesus once declared, and yet, he added, he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. The Kingdom of heaven was the standard from which Jesus judged the great and the small. Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, Mary the mother of Jesus had triumphantly sung, and yet Jesus once asked, Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking around on his disciples added, Whosoever shall do the will of God the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. Obedience to the King of the Kingdom of heaven was the standard by which he judged his kindred, and nearer to him than blood relations were those who did his Father's will. When Peter would turn him from the way of the Cross, from fulfilling the will of God, Jesus called him "Satan." So here, when his mother and his brothers would turn him from his God-given work, he recognized the danger in their importunity.

Kinship with Christ is not a matter of flesh and blood, but of motive and spirit. It is not a question of the performance of great deeds, but of faithfulness in the carrying out of the small deeds given us to do. A better kinship than this with Christ there is none. Would you be a member of the royal family? A better relationship than this with Christ there is none. Jesus, the Son of the King of kings, and you his brother, his sister, his mother? You can be through the doing of the will of his Father in heaven. You may be of royal blood, a child of the King, an heir of God and joint heir of Christ, having an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Sons of God. When Danish missionaries in India were translating the catechism with the help of converted natives, and they came to the words that Christians are the sons of God, one of their helpers said: "It is too much; let us rather translate it, 'They shall be permitted to kiss his feet.'"

One who was Akin to Christ. Horace Pitkin, a missionary who gave his life in the Boxer massacres, wrote a parting letter to his wife in which he asked her to train up their little boy to love the Saviour and to send him out when twenty-five years of age to take up the work he was forced to lay down. In his eagerness to be Christ's witness unto "the uttermost part of the earth," his willingness to sacrifice his life in carrying out his commission, and his readiness to forgive his enemies, Horace Pitkin was doing the will of God and proving himself akin to Christ.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Sympathy is the condition of insight into character. *Alexander Maclaren.*

There never was an idea started that woke up men out of their stupid indifference but its originator was spoken of as a crank. *O. W. Holmes.*

He that is not with me is against me. Mt. 12.30.

> Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil;
> That put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
> That put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Isa. 5.20.

Let neither foes nor loving friends e'er hurt you;
Let all men count with you, but none too much. Adapted from *Kipling.*

My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever. Gen. 6.3.

The sin against the Holy Spirit is the sin of not caring. *Dr. John Douglas Adam.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Jesus knew what it means to be misunderstood. Not only did he have to meet the unbelief and enmity of Pharisees and rabble, but the keener pain of being doubted and misunderstood by those of his own household. He bore both right royally. So can we. "By the strange bitterness of cruel enemies, false followers, weak friends," prays Hester Alway, "inspire me to give all and be content with nothing."

Whoever earnestly seeks to do the will of God, as Christ has shown us his will, is one with him in a kinship closer than that of blood.

Kinsmen of Christ cannot treat one another as aliens.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

So great was the crowd which thronged to see and hear Jesus at his home in Capernaum that he and his disciples could find no opportunity even to eat. His friends became alarmed and declared that he was beside himself, or he would not permit such things. And the scribes who had come from Jerusalem to torment him but were forced to acknowledge his power over demons, charged him with gaining that power through living in league with Satan, the prince of demons. Calling them to him Jesus showed the absurdity of their charge. "How can Satan cast out Satan?" he asked. "A kingdom or a house that is divided against itself will not stand. If Satan is waging war with himself, he shall perish. No one can enter a strong man's house and spoil his goods unless he has first bound that strong man: so I must first have bound Satan before I spoiled Satan's goods—the demons—as you call them." And then Jesus added a most solemn warning. "Truly I tell you, all men's sins and blasphemies may be forgiven save the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which being an eternal sin is eternally unforgivable." This he said because the scribes accused him of having an unclean spirit; by that accusation they called the Holy Spirit working in Jesus a demon and thus showed the perversity of their hearts which were in danger of becoming hardened beyond the possibility of repenting.

While Jesus was thus absorbed, his mother and his brothers came, and as if they had the right to interrupt his work, sought to call him away. When Jesus was told that they were waiting, he answered, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" and then looking round on those about him he said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren! For he who does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." As tender and close as is the relationship of mother and brother and sister, still tenderer and closer to Jesus the Son of God is the spiritual relationship of those whose obedience to God's will makes them sons of God.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Christian unity: the federation of Christians, the kinsmen of Christ, "that they all may be one."
2. The masterful arguments of Jesus.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Where does Luke say the multitude came from? (Lk. 8.4.) 2. Who is the Sower? 3. What is the seed? 4. When did Jesus teach that good men are known by their fruit? (Mt. 12.33.) 5. What patriarch harvested a hundred-fold? (Gen. 26.12.) 6. Compare the reason for using parables as given by Mark with that reported by Matthew, 13.10-17. 7. When and for whom was the third Gospel written? (Clipping, p. 30.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is a parable? (Dictionary.) 2. How does it differ from a fable? (Dictionary.) 3. Describe the four kinds of hearers represented by the four kinds of soil. 4. How do you listen to the reading of the word? 5. How do you read the Bible? 6. Apply to the teaching of the parable the fact that soil can be improved. 7. Who are meant by "they that are without," v. 11? 8. In what lesson from the Old Testament last year did we have words similar to those of v. 12, and what did they mean? (May 14, 1910: Isa. 6.) 9. What is the meaning here of v. 12? (Clipping, p. 263.)

Note Book and Memory Work. See page 17, Introduction. Commit to memory verses 3-8, 14-20.

LESSON II—JULY 14

THE SEED IN THE FOUR KINDS OF SOIL

Golden Text

Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. James 1.21

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 4.1-9. **The Seed in** the Four Kinds of Soil. **T.** Mark 4.10-20. The Parable Explained. **W.** Acts 17. 1-9. Sowing on Stony Soil. **T.** Acts 17.10-15. Sowing on Good Soil. **F.** Matt. 7.15-27. The Doer and the Hearer. **S.** Heb. 4.1-12. Hearing Without Faith. **S.** Gal. 6.1-10. Sowing and Reaping. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 4.1-20 READ Mt. 13.1-23; Lk. 8.4-15 COMMIT v 20

1 And again he began to teach by the sea side. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea; and all the multitude were by the sea on the land. 2 And he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching, 3 Hearken: Behold, the sower went forth to sow: 4 and it came to pass, as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured it. 5 And other fell on the rocky *ground,* where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth: 6 and when the sun was risen, it was scorched: and because it had no root, it withered away. 7 And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. 8 And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. 9 And he said, Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parables. 11 And he said unto them, Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: 12 that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them. 13 And he saith unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how shall ye know all the parables? 14 The sower soweth the word. 15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; and when they have heard, straightway cometh Satan, and taketh away the word which hath been sown in them. 16 And these in like manner are they that are sown upon the rocky *places,* who, when they have heard the word, straightway receive it with joy; 17 and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway they stumble. 18 And others are they that are sown among the thorns; these are they that have heard the word, 19 and the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. 20 And those are they that were sown upon the good ground; such as hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *Again.* See Mk. 2.13; 3.7.—*By the seaside.* The Sea of Galilee.—*He taught many things in parables.* Thirty parables are recorded in the Gospels. The Greek verb from which the noun *parable* is derived means literally *to place side by side,* hence *to compare:* a parable is a comparison.

3-9. *Behold.* Perhaps a sower was in sight as he spoke.—*The wayside.* The hard-trodden path through the unfenced fields.—*Rocky ground where it had not much earth.* This was not ground full of rocks or stones, but a thin layer of soil resting on rock which was here and there exposed.—*Straightway it*

sprang up. The warmth of the underlying rock would make the crop spring up quickly and look very promising at first.—*It was scorched.* Because it had no moisture, Luke adds.—*It had no root.* The roots could not strike deep into the earth and without nourishment they soon dried up.—*Among thorns.* The ground was sown with the seeds of thorns.—*Hundredfold.* See Gen. 26.12.—*Let him hear.* See page 231.

11-13. *The mystery of the kingdom.* The One Volume Commentary quotes the rabbinical saying, "God entrusts not his mysteries save to the just." The mysteries are the deeper spiritual teachings.—*Them that are without.* A phrase often used by Paul: 1 Cor. 5.12; Col. 4.5; 1 Th. 4.12; 1 Tim. 3.7.—*That seeing ...forgiven them.* A parable reveals or hides a truth according as the hearer has or has not spiritual discernment, and in this verse Jesus is declaring that the parable hides the truth from those without the kingdom—his great multitude of field hearers—not because it is his will that it should, but because it is the will of his hearers. The words express, not the wish of Jesus, but the effect which he knows will result. The words are practically a quotation from Isa. 6.9, 10: Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again, and be healed. These are the words that came to Isaiah when he had his vision and commission: they indicate, not what was the purpose of Isaiah's teaching, but what would be, as he well knew, the result of his teaching. Possibly Mark, the historian, finding that these words of Isaiah had been applied to the Jews who listened to the words of Jesus, himself fitted them into the narrative here.

14. *The sower soweth the word.* The seed is the word of God, Lk. 8.11. The sower is Christ.—*They by the wayside.* Whose hearts are closed to the word by their absorption in other things.—*They that are sown upon rocky places.* The expression is involved, but the context makes it clear: The seed is the word, and by "they that are sown" is meant that their attitude toward the word of God is as that of the rocky places toward the seed of grain. They listen to the word and seemingly readily accept it, but they are shallow and unstable, and as easily reject it.—*They that are sown among thorns.* Those who try to serve both God and mammon.—*Cares of the world.* Or, *age,* RVm. Not the world, but the anxieties in regard to the things of the world.—*Deceitfulness of riches.* Not riches, but riches in which one puts his trust and therefore is deceived.—*Lusts.* Desires.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

8. *And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit.* The mission station at Syen Chun, China, is only nine years old. Here is a report of a Sunday recently spent there by a traveller. Two-thirds of the five thousand people are Christians, two thousand five hundred have been baptized. In the morning there were two thousand six hundred people at church in four services held at the church building, the Boys' High School, the Girls' High School and the Bible Institute Building. In the afternoon at two o'clock it rained hard. Twelve hundred adult Christians attended the services to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Twenty-four hundred came in the rain to the four afternoon services. In the evening the Korean evangelist, who had been sent to Siberia, gave a report of his Foreign Mission work at Vladivostock. The Korean Christians raised enough money to continue the services for another year of this evangelist in far-away Siberia.

10. *The twelve asked of him the parables.* It is good for us, when we have heard or read the word, to examine ourselves, or to be examined, whether we have understood it or not. *Matthew Henry.*

11. *Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God.* There were markedly two sides to the life of Jesus, the simpler side of homely adaptation to daily life, and the more hidden, more complex, more unique side of lofty thought, of eternal vision, of God-communion, of grasp on the great truths that lie hidden in daily conduct as the steel frame is buried in the modern building. The crowd that watched and listened caught accurately the simpler side. Out of each discourse they grasped and treasured up but a few sentences; much of

it left them confused, bewildered at the revelation of a mind far beyond their power of thought; but they carried away bits of wonderfully simple wisdom. But only a few could catch the inward truth of Jesus' life. It was the hidden face of the moon, that never shows itself to the ordinary gaze. His loftier sayings were arrows shot into the air. Only in the heart of a friend could they find lodgment, as the arrow in the unknown oak. *Dr. Wm. P. Merrill,* in *The Biblical World.*

19. *Other things entering in.*

God often would enrich, but finds not where to place
His treasure;—nor in hand nor heart a vacant space. *R. G. Trench.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *The sower went forth to sow.* The expression implies that the sower, in the days of our Saviour, lived in a hamlet or village, as all these farmers now do; that he did not sow near his own house, or in a garden fenced or walled, for such a field does not furnish all the basis of the parable. There are neither roads nor thorns nor stony places in such lots. He must go forth into the open country, where there are no fences; where the path passes through the cultivated land; where thorns grow in clumps all around; where the rocks peep out in places through the scanty soil, and where also, hard by, are patches extremely fertile. Now here we have the whole four within a dozen rods of us. Our horses are actually trampling down some seeds which have fallen by the wayside, the larks and sparrows are busy picking them up. That man, with his mattock, is digging about places where the rock is too near the surface for the plough, and much that is sown there will wither away, because it has no deepness of earth. And not a few seeds have fallen among this *bellan,* and will be effectually choked by this most tangled of thorn bushes. But a large portion, after all, falls into really good ground, and four months hence will exhibit every variety of crop. *W. H. Thomson,* in *The Land and the Book.*

4. *The birds came and devoured* it. It is not always through want of time that they sow the seed in the ploughed ground, it is also to prevent the myriads of birds from descending and picking up the grain, for it is more difficult for them to eat it in the dry clods than in the moist soil. Millions of starlings come in October and November, and are often a serious nuisance, sometimes obliging the peasants to sow again. But the advent of the starlings promises good crops; the proverb says, "In the year of the starlings plough in waste lands." *Palestine Exploration Fund.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

On that day in Capernaum, after the episode of the coming of his mother and brethren (last week's lesson), Jesus left the house and went to the Sea of Galilee. Entering a boat he sat there and talked to the multitude on the shore, telling them the parables which we call the Parables by the Seaside or the Parables of the Kingdom. These parables are the theme of the three succeeding lessons.

The parable of the Sower served two purposes at the time Jesus uttered it: it was both a defense and an explanation of the situation as regards the kingdom of heaven—here that personal, invisible kingdom within the hearts of men where Jesus the Christ is King—of which he so often spoke. It taught the disciples that, though the kingdom was slow in appearing—though the religious authorities opposed the King, though even his kindred thought him insane (as the events of that day showed, Mt. 12.22-50 and Mk. 3.21), and though his real followers were still few in number—they need not be discouraged; most of the seed sown failed to yield fruit, but that which did, yielded manyfold. As a defense, the parable is rightly called the Parable of the Sower, for Jesus himself is here the Sower. As an explanation of the situation, a better title would be the Parable of the Soils. The reason that the yield of grain was not greater was not in the seed sown, but in the soils that received it: the reason the kingdom did not make greater progress was that so few hearts were prepared to receive the word of God.

Assign paragraphs 57, 72-77, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

We have a beautiful parable for our lesson to-day. Does any one know what a parable is? A parable tells us what something is like. It is a story or a word illustration which helps us understand something else, because the two are alike in some one way. A little girl well called it "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." Have you read "Pilgrim's Progress"? That is a very long parable which shows how people may get to heaven. Most parables are short. Jesus taught many lessons by means of parables. One day he sat in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, near the shore (show Tissot's picture No. 24, Jesus Preaching from a Boat), and told the crowd of people on the shore the parable of the Sower. As you tell the story of the parable and explain the kinds of soil where the seed fell, show Tissot's "Parable of the Sower," No. 41, and the four panelled picture by H. L. Roberts, Brown No. 436. Omit verses 10-13. Give a clear but simple explanation of the parable. These words of Mark Guy Pearse in regard to "the bird field" and "the weedy field" will show you how: In the bird field there are swift wood-pigeons, that go flying into the distance; there are lazy crows wheeling into the air, and flapping out of danger with a "caw, caw" as much as to say, "We are not caught yet." The blackbirds fly screaming into the hedge, and little birds rise up from the field in a cloud. We can't help thinking that we know many fields just as badly off as this. How many boys and girls there are in whom all the good seed is eaten up by the fowls of the air; and who does not know the names of many of these birds? One busy, bold little bird that steals much good seed on all sides, is called *Inattention.* Then there is the *chattering Magpie,* a great thief; busy whispering here and there, and humming and buzzing, a very destructive bird is this.

And who does not know the weedy fields? Boys and girls who have been carefully taught, and yet there came nothing but weeds. Those boys with the good seed sown in them, began to quarrel afterwards; so there came nettles and thorns instead of good fruit. This girl has the good seed in her heart, but she begins to think unkind thoughts, and perhaps to say spiteful things; so comes a prickly thistle instead of good seed. But notice that there is one part of the field that is quite clean. The corn is pushing up and all is promising a plentiful crop. We ask how this is. Listen to the farmer's answer. "I sent for as many boys and girls as I could get, and they came, and got on their knees, and pulled up the weeds, and cleared the ground. So there I shall have some good fruit." So boys and girls, let us set to pulling up weeds. We must ask God to help us, and he will. Let us get rid of the weeds, these nettles and thistles of ill temper; the inattention and the forgetting, and the things that come in the wrong place,—try to pull them up.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The scene of our lesson is the Sea of Galilee. A great throng of people have collected on the shore, and Jesus with his disciples are in a boat, pushed off a little way from the land, so that others cannot enter. Like an amphitheater before the Great Teacher stretches the beach with its throng of people, behind them the white houses of Capernaum, and beyond those the mountains of Galilee. It may well be that on the mountain slope Jesus sees a man sowing seed as he says to the waiting multitude, Behold a sower went forth to sow.

For Older Pupils. What is a parable? Webster says it is a short, fictitious narrative of something which might really occur in life or nature by means of which a moral is drawn. How does it differ from a fable? (It is true to life or nature, and has a higher spiritual purpose.) A parable is a most useful and valuable means of imparting truth. The force of the parable we may see by comparing it to a parabolic reflector. "Why does so small a flame in the engine's head light cast light so bright and so far?" a student asked. "Because it stands in the focus of a parabolic reflector," was the answer. And then the teacher further explained: "A curved surface known as parabolic is such that every ray of light is projected in lines alongside each other. Light naturally scatters itself weakly in all directions alike. But in the parabolic mir-

ror it is all turned back and massed in parallel lines." So in parabolic teaching the rays of light from the story are projected in lines parallel with that of the truth to be taught and illuminate it. What led Jesus to give the parable of the Sower? (Historical Background).

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Take Heed how ye Hear

Ears that are not Purveyors to the Mind. In "The House of Martha," Frank R. Stockton thus philosophizes: "During my lonely walks and rides through the country about our village, I began to cogitate and philosophize upon the present social value of the human ear. Why do people in society and in domestic circles have ears? I asked myself. They do not use them to listen to one another. And then I thought and pondered further, and suddenly the truth came to me: The ears of the present generation are not purveyors to the mind; they are merely agents of the tongue, who watch for breaks or make places in the speech of others, in order that their principal may rush in and hold the field."

Have you never known what it is apparently to listen to a conversation and yet not really to hear a word thereof? Your ears were not closed, your organs of hearing were in good condition, the words were promptly carried by the nerves to your brain, but your mind did not take cognizance of them, did not heed them, because your thoughts were engaged upon something else. Our hearing is not an involuntary process, it is directly controlled by our wills and is subject to direct training. By taking heed how we hear we can increase our power to hear. There is always danger of receiving the word even as the hard or the shallow or the thorny ground receives the seed. Take heed how ye hear.

Moral Deafness. There is a form of deafness known to physicians in which the person affected is able to hear everything except words. In such a case the ear, as an apparatus for mere hearing, may be so perfect that the tick of a watch or the song of a bird is readily appreciated, but owing to a local injury deeper than the ear, for it is in the brain itself, all spoken words of his mother tongue are as unintelligible to the sufferer as those of a foreign language. Give him a book, and he may read as understandingly as ever, but every word addressed to him through his ear reaches his consciousness only as a sound, not as a word. There is a moral deafness which corresponds to this physical infirmity, but which, instead of being rare, is as common as it is harmful and disabling. To all men there is given an inner ear, which has been fashioned to hear Wisdom's words, but that ear often seems so dull of hearing that there appears no sign of response to her utterances. *W. H. Thomson.*

How to hear. I hold in my hands two bottles, as you can easily see; and we will undertake to fill them with water from this pitcher. This one I fill very easily. There is no trouble about it at all. Now we will try the other. I have poured out plenty of water; let us see if the bottle is full. No, there's nothing in it. What is the trouble? The water was perfectly willing to go into this bottle; it had no prejudice against this as compared with the other. This bottle, too, is a larger one and there's more room in it to hold the water than there is in that; and yet that one I filled very easily and this one I didn't get a bit into.

Let me try once more. We will hold them up together side by side so that the same pouring will cover the mouth of each bottle. Now let us see how they have fared. The little one, again, is full of water. Let us see the other. There's nothing in it at all, is there?

Why? "It has a cork in it." Oh, yes. That explains it. This one had a cork in all the while! We will just take the cork out and see if there's any trouble about filling it. Now see! I have it full and overflowing.

The only difference, then, in the two cases was that one bottle had a stopper in it and the other one was without a stopper; and the water couldn't go in to fill the bottle that had its mouth closed; that is to say, that had the stopper in.

Even the great and good God cannot give a blessing to any one who closes his eyes and his ears and his heart against him. We may go to church with our hearts shut up. We may even pray with stoppers in! And then we get

no blessing. The water pours from the fountain freely. God is eager to give us rich gifts! But it is only the hungry-hearted who are filled. Condensed from *Little Ten-Minutes,* by *Frank T. Bayley.*

II Large Harvests

"No Weeds." Surely, it is a great deal to avoid wrong-doing; but what would you account that husbandry to be worth which succeeded only in keeping down weeds? A man goes on ploughing and ploughing, harrowing and harrowing, hoeing and hoeing; and he rejoices, as July comes on, saying, "There is not a weed on my farm—not a weed." Round and round he goes, looking into every corner, and under every hedge, to spy out any weeds that may have been left; and he says, "Not one weed shall grow on this farm." But where is thy corn, O farmer? "I have no corn." Where is thy wheat? "I have no wheat." Where are thy fruits? "I have no fruits." What hast thou? No weeds! *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Be not Content with Meager Harvests. Thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold means a yield of three thousand, six thousand, ten thousand per cent. upon the original investment. Forcibly this brings to us the question of how our harvests should be rated! Among the boys in the Southern States there is held annually a corn-planting contest, and wonderful results have been obtained by the prize-winners. B. C. Mitchell obtained eleven hundred grains from one little grain.

Be not content to be as good as your neighbor; be as good as you can be. Be not content to be as good as you were last year; be better than you were a year ago. One who is good but makes no effort to be better, who strives not to surpass himself, is on the point of making a failure of his life.

Improve the Harvest. At a meeting of farmers held recently in Alabama one of them gave this experience. "I have raised cotton on my farm for more than forty years. I thought no one could tell me anything about raising cotton. I usually raised half a bale an acre on my thin soil and I thought that was all there was in it. The demonstrator expert came along and wanted me to try scientific agriculture. He asked me to try his plan on two acres. I agreed, but I did not much believe what he told me. However, I tried my best to do as he said, and at the end of the year I had a bale and a half to the acre on the two acres worked his way, and a little over a third of a bale on the land worked my way. You could have knocked me down with a feather. This year I have a bale and a half to the acre on my whole farm. As a good cotton-planter I am just one year old."

Suppose we call this account a parable and make a personal application of it. As soil for the word of God, how much spiritual fruit are you bearing? Can your method be improved? As a good hearer of the Word just how old are you?

A Condition of Fruitfulness. In the conservatory we find singular orchids, which have no root whatever; attaching themselves to a piece of wood hung on the wall, they continue to grow and bloom without soil or sprinkling, curious freaks that they are; but entering the vinery where the great clusters hang and the orchards where precious fruits ripen, we find roots enough, to which the closest attention is paid. Pretty bits of fancy bloom manage to exist without roots, not the fruit-bearers which are the glory of the garden. It is the first great doctrine of revelation that a rich, fruit-bearing life must have depth of earth, that it must pierce to the vital soil of the spiritual universe, that in faith and love it must take hold of God. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Bane and the Antidote.*

III Causes of Unfruitfulness

Hardened Hearts. I talked with a man the other day, who told me he fell when he was twelve years old, and he did not know any better, and God let him, and he bore a grudge against God for allowing it to happen, "and now," he said, "I won't come to him." "Well, but," I said, "you know what is right, don't you?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I know that perfectly," and we talked nearly an afternoon through; and although what he ought to do, what it was right for him to do, what it was wrong for him not to do, he saw just as clearly

as anyone else could see it, he rounded up every ten or fifteen minutes with simply saying, "Mr. Speer, I won't, I won't, I won't." At the end of the afternoon he went away still set in his iron resolution not to, his selfishness having hardened into adamant against all the real life in him, the possibilities of the higher manhood, the doing of the thing that he knew to be right and his duty.

There is one of Horace Bushnell's great sermons which bears in its title, as almost all of his sermons do, the whole lesson that he intends to enforce, "The Capacity for Religion extirpated by Disuse." You can lose almost any faculty. Out in India the fakirs can hold up their hands so long that they absolutely lose the power of movement in their arms. A man can so desist from using the higher capacities of his mind that after a little while the faculties are not there any more. It is just the same way in the matter of all these spiritual interests. A man can chill them, and neglect them, and trample on them and ignore them so long that by and by they go away, and when he comes and looks at the door there are the marks of blood there, but the one who was standing waiting to come in has passed beyond recall. *Robert E. Speer,* in *Spiritual Indifference.*

Shallow Hearts. They that are sown upon the rocky places have no root in themselves. Beneath the light, thin surface of easily-stirred dust lies the bed of rock. The shallow ground was stony ground. And it is among the children of light enjoyment and unsettled life that we must look for stony heartlessness. If you wish to know what hollowness and heartlessness are, you must look for them in the world of light, elegant, superficial fashion—where frivolity has turned the heart into a rock-bed of selfishness. Say what men will of the heartlessness of trade, it is nothing compared with the heartlessness of fashion. *F. W. Robertson, Sermons.*

The Cares of the World, the Deceitfulness of Riches and the Lusts of Other Things choke the Word and it becometh Unfruitful. The cares of this world: there is a small but very fatal species of this thorn called Fretfulness. Once fretfulness establishes itself in the heart, the task of uprooting it is analogous to the task of uprooting chickweed from your garden. There is an immense amount of moral energy and force extracted from the heart by sheer fretfulness. There is a word of the psalmist, which indicates startling moral insight, and reveals a profound moral truth. "Fret not thyself ... to do evil." That is what fretting leads to—evil doing! We can so reduce our moral force by fretfulness, so strain and weaken our spiritual garrison, that the citadel of our heart becomes a defenceless structure, and the tempter has easy entrance and possession, and leads us away captive at his will. Fretfulness diminishes spiritual force. It sucks away the thought and energy which ought to feed religious impulse and endeavor. To return to the Master's figure, it is a thorn among the wheat. It drains away the food-stuff from the higher nature, and disables us from bringing forth any good impulse to perfection.

The deceitfulness of riches: here is another thorn. Fretfulness cheats the heart of the thought which ought to feed the spiritual life. Riches, in most subtle deceitfulness, cheat the soul of the same bread. How do riches deceive men? Men are deceived as to when a normal and healthy desire for wealth passes into avarice. Their thoughts become so absorbed in the pursuit of wealth that they have none left to determine their moral whereabouts. The Master calls this "deceitfulness of riches," a thorn which sucks up the thought, the attention, the aspiration, the resolution; and so good impulse does not grow and come to maturity: it dies down and passes away.

The lusts of other things, of the pleasures of this life. This is another of the impoverishing thorns. The pleasures of the senses are not to be despised, but we are not to abide in them. That is our snare—to give so much thought to the "pleasures of this life" that we have none for "the pleasures of God's right hand." That is the thorn which chokes the wheat. Condensed from *The Folly of Unbelief,* by *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

By their fruits ye shall know them. Mt. 7.16.

"It is not just as we take it,
This mystical world of ours;
Life's field will yield as we make it
A harvest of thorns or of flowers.

Wise words in dull ears are but lifeless lore. *Goethe.*
To-day grows the harvest of heaven. *Longfellow.*
Apply every known system of horticulture and hearticulture for the largest fold of result. *Bishop Warren.*

The Word must be sown in the heart like seed;
Men's hands must tend it, their lives defend it,
Till it burst into flower as a deathless Deed. *John Boyle O'Reilly.*

In the judgment of the world a life may be without fault, while at the same time in the judgment of God it may be without fruit, and hence is unfulfilling the purpose of its creation. *J. Stuart Holden.*
Even the good man is bad if he refuses to try to be a better man. *W. Jaspar Howell.*
A man can not say that he was honest if his life dried up, and the seed of God withered away in the scorching heat: it was possible to deepen the soil. *Dr. F. J. McConnell.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

The central truth of the Parable of the Sower is that just as the same seed in the different kinds of soil yields no fruit, or different rates of increase, so the same word of God listened to by different kinds of hearts makes no impression, or is productive of good in varying degrees. How are you receiving the word of God? Is there danger of your heart becoming too indifferent or too shallow or too occupied?
Why should you be as the ground that yields only thirtyfold? Why should you not bear much fruit? Ask yourself Lowell's question:

"I gave thee of my seed to sow,
Bringest thou me my hundredfold?"
Can I look up with face aglow,
And answer, "Father, here is gold"?

Our Prayer. Save us, O Lord, from indifference and fickleness and self-centeredness. Give us the hearing ear and the understanding heart. May we hear thy word gladly, may we never doubt its power to instruct and bless, and may its teaching bear abundant fruit in our lives.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The great peril for the church-goer.
2. How can the pew help the pulpit?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. How many parables are given by Matthew together with the Parable of the Sower? (Mt. 13.) 2. In what Gospels is the parable of the Growing Grain given? (Only in Mark.) 3. How does Longfellow describe the growing corn in The Song of Hiawatha? 4. How many pecks in three measures of meal? (See footnote of your Bible.) 5. Would so much be used at one baking? (Clipping, p. 271.) 6. Is the mustard seed the smallest of all seeds? (Clipping, p. 270.) 7. What does Luke say in his preface about his writing of a Gospel? (Clipping, p. 31.)
Questions to think about. 1. Give the interpretation of the parable of the Growing Grain. (Clipping, p. 273.) 2. What is man's part in the sowing? 3. What is God's part? 4. What same meaning have all three parables of the lesson? 5. What special meaning has each that the other two have not?
Note Book and Memory Work. Continue your Note Book Work. Commit to memory the lesson for next week.

LESSON III—JULY 21

THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM

Golden Text

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Mt. 6.10

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 4.26-32; Matt. 13.33. The Growth of the Kingdom. **T.** 1 Kings 19.1-14. Not by Force. **W.** Mic. 4.1-8. By Moral Influence. **T.** Zech. 4.1-10. Obstacles Overcome. **F.** Matt. 20.1-16. Laborers in the Kingdom. **S.** Mark 9.38-50. Tolerance among Workers. **S.** John 13.12-20. Condition of Leadership. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 4.26-32; Mt. 13.33 COMMIT vv 26-28

Mk. 4:26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast
seed upon the earth; 27 and should sleep and rise night and day, and the
seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. 28 The earth bareth
fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.
29 But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the
harvest is come.
30 And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable
shall we set it forth? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is
sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the
earth, 32 yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the
herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge
under the shadow thereof.
Mk. 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is
like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till
it was all leavened.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

26-29. This parable of the Growing Seed is the only parable given by Mark alone. It portrays the slow but sure growth of the kingdom in the individual. —*As if a man should cast seed upon the earth.* As the apostles and later followers of Christ implant the word of God in the souls of men.—*And should sleep and rise night and day.* After having sown the seed he sleeps at night and rises in the morning, leaving the result with God.—*And the seeds should spring up and grow.* "As the unseen forces in the earth have much to do with the harvest, so there are unseen spiritual forces gradually advancing the kingdom." —*He knoweth not how.* In every one there is a spiritual nature capable of receiving and developing the Word, however improbable it may seem to men.—*Beareth.* Or, *yieldeth.*—*First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.* The growth is gradual.—*Is ripe.* Or, *alloweth,* RVm.—*Putteth forth.* Or, *sendeth forth,* RVm.

30-32. *It is like.* Greek *as unto,* RVm.—*Though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth.* Though not the smallest seed known to botanical science (the seed of the lycopodium, one of the fern-worts, is smaller) the mustard seed was the smallest seed cultivated by the Jews and was popularly regarded as the smallest of all seeds: "The rabbis called the smallest possible quantity 'the quantity of a grain of mustard.'"—*Becometh greater than all the herbs.* It sometimes grows to a height of ten or twelve feet.—*Putteth out great branches.* "A stalk of mustard was in my field, into which I was wont to climb as men are wont to climb into a fig-tree" (*Rabbi Simeon*).

Mt. 13.33. *Leaven.* Yeast. In the interpretation of the parable it is the in-

fluence of Christ; the Christian spirit works in the hearts of men as rapidly and thoroughly as yeast does in dough.—*Measures.* The word in the Greek denotes the Hebrew *seah,* a measure containing nearly a peck and a half, RVm. Three measures was the usual amount for one baking, Gen. 18.6.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

27. *And the seed should spring up and grow.*

Till at length a small green feather
From the earth shot slowly upward,
Then another and another,
And before the summer ended
Stood the maize in all its beauty,
With its shining robes about it,
And its long, soft, yellow tresses.
And still later, when the autumn
Changed the long, green leaves to yellow,
And the soft and juicy kernels
Grew like wampum hard and yellow,
Then the ripened ears he gathered,
Stripped the withered husks from off them,
And made known unto the people
This new gift of the Great Spirit.
Longfellow, Song of Hiawatha.

Mustard

27. *He knoweth not how.*

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower;—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is. *Tennyson.*

28. *The earth beareth fruit of herself.*

"We plough the fields and scatter
The good seed o'er the land;
But it is fed and watered
By God's Almighty hand.
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine,
The sweet refreshing rain."

33. *Hid in three measures of meal.* The kingdom is not hidden to-day. The leaven has been working through the centuries. The presence of the kingdom is the most noticeable fact in the world's life to-day. We talk about the British Empire embracing one-fifth part of the habitable globe; and the great Russian Empire claiming a sixth part of the world; and the German Empire and the French Empire and the rest of them. But there is one Empire greater, vaster than any other—the Empire of King Jesus. It is in our midst, the mightiest kingdom, the most potent force on earth. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Model Prayer.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

32. *The birds of heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.* In the proper season the traveller on Gennesaret may ride by mustard-bushes as high as his horse, and alive with flocks of merry bulfinches or of rock-pigeons feeding upon the seeds. *W. H. Thomson,* in *The Parables by the Lake.*

33. *Leaven.* The careful oriental housewife always saves a portion of the sour dough (the German word for leaven is *sauerteig,* sour dough) from each baking, to use in the next, for she does not have our convenient cakes of yeast.

33. *Three measures of meal.* It cannot be doubted that the three measures of meal amounted to more than our English bushel in quantity. To us this

would appear as more than what a large family would use at one baking; but the conditions of ordinary Palestine life do not render it at all unusual. Accustomed as we are to a great variety of food, including an abundance of meat, we use bread more as an accompaniment to, than as the chief article of, a meal. But in our Saviour's time, as well as now, the main food of the people was fermented milk, cheese, olives and oil, figs, raisins, and bread. It will be seen by this that bread is literally the staff of life with them, to which all else is subsidiary, and therefore that the statement of the parable simply conforms to the familiar facts of the household economy in that land. *W. H. Thomson,* in *The Parables by the Lake.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The explanation of the Parable of the Sower was probably given to the disciples and others with him in the boat on the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum. Again he seems to have turned to the waiting crowd on the shore and given them the parables of the Growing Corn, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, and the Tares. Luke connects the parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven with much later events.

Assign paragraphs 157, 78-79, *In The Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

The reasoning powers of your pupils are not yet developed and an attempt to teach all three parables of this lesson and their explanations would result in dire confusion. Easy and interesting as it would be to talk about the parable of the Growing Grain, to apply the truth for which the parable was given would be difficult and dull. It will be the part of wisdom to take only the parable of the Mustard Seed for your theme. Remember Froebel's word of encouragement: The child takes each story as a conquest, grasps each as a treasure, and inserts into his own life for his own advancement and instruction, what each story teaches and shows.

The parable is your story, which will lead to a talk about the growth of great things from little things, the importance of little things. If you have a room by yourselves let your pupils sing this little rhyme—

Just a little seed,
Very small indeed;
Put it in the ground,
In a little mound,
And wait and see
What it will be.

Tell them about robin redbreast's ear of corn (next paragraph), and about the boy's society, page 275. Leave the thought with your pupils which they will get from the raindrop's story: The summer had been hot and dry, no rain had fallen for many weeks, the grass was all withered and plants were drooping. Then a cloud came over the sky. The drops of water in the cloud looked down and said: "Why should I fall where everything is so parched? What good can one little drop of water do? It would take countless drops of water to bring life back again to those miles upon miles of dry earth. One little drop of water will not count." But soon the little drop had a wiser thought: "Why, I can help to wet the earth above one little buried acorn, and that will help it to live and some day it will be a great tree giving shade to many people throughout many, many years. One little drop of water does count."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. If you should go to France, you might hear some one say: "This is robin redbreast's ear of corn." You would have to ask what he meant, for you could never guess without help. And this is what you would be told. Long, long ago, when the people living here were all heathen, some monks came to preach the gospel. They built a stone chapel for worship and a rude building for themselves, and then they wanted to cultivate the ground

so that they could have something beside what they could get from hunting and fishing. But they had no grain to sow. Then one day a robin redbreast was seen on a branch of a tree, holding in his beak a grain of corn. The bird dropped it as he flew off, and they eagerly secured and planted it. This grew and produced several ears, which they carefully gathered and planted. And now you see field upon field of waving yellow corn, and it all came from that one grain of the robin redbreast. To teach that wonderful spiritual harvests come from just such small beginnings Jesus gave the three parables of our lesson: What do we call them?

For Older Pupils. "Stick in a tree, Jack, it will aye be growing while ye are sleeping," was the advice given by the Laird of Dumbiedykes to his son. God's trees, God's seed cast upon the earth, are everywhere growing, and what a beautiful thought it is that having stuck in the tree or planted the seed, having done our part as best we can, we may sleep by night and rise by day, content to leave results with God. How did Jesus give this encouraging thought in regard to the growth of the kingdom of God?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Lessons from the Growing Grain

The Interpretation of the Parable. The spiritual interpretation follows the natural. Our Lord is the Husbandman. He comes to the earth as the husbandman comes to his field. The seed he sows is the gospel. That is the first thing. Next, having flung his seed on the soil of the mind of man, having thrown it as a useful germ into man's life and thought, his work is done, he departs from the earth. The scene of operations is now the earth itself, the bosom of mankind. It has to put forth its powers. Having received the seed it must nourish it. As the husbandman, having committed the seed to the soil, can do no more, but must leave nature to do it; so the Lord will do nothing more, but will leave the powers of the human mind, the forces of the human heart, the capabilities of the soul of man, and all the expanding activities of human society and life, with its ideal inspiration and its practical operation, to do the rest. Finally, when the whole process of growth has been gone through, the blade, the ear and the full corn in the ear, the Lord, the Husbandman, will once more come upon the scene, he will put in his sickle and reap the harvest which so long ago he had sown. *The Expository Times.*

God and Man work together. In the parable the husbandman does his part in preparing the ground and in sowing the seed, and then he leaves it in the care of the earth, depending upon it together with the action of sun and air and rain to carry the germinating life through its stages of growth—blade, ear and full grain—and then when full maturity is reached, he comes and harvests it. Man's industry and God's rain and sunshine work together to produce the harvest of grain. Man puts forth the powers within him and then trusts to powers that lie beyond him for results. In all good work there is this co-operation of God with man, of man with God. So is the kingdom of God, for its extension in the hearts of men depends upon the agency of men and the power of God.

Spiritual Growth is Gradual. Nothing great is produced suddenly, not even a grape or a fig. If you say to me that you want a grape or a fig now, I will answer you that you cannot have it; a grape takes time. Let it flower first, then it will put forth its fruit, and then ripen. And would you have the fruit of a man's life and character all in a moment? Do not expect it. *Epictetus.*

The Purpose of the Seed. The demand is not merely for a good life, but for a life that is good for something; teachable that at last it may itself teach; growing that at last it may be fruitful. First the blade, Jesus teaches, then the ear; but both for the sake of the grain which shall feed the hungry. It is not the virtue one has attained or the things one does not do which makes one a Christian. One may be saved by temperament from many faults which degrade, or saved by prudence from the mistakes of the precipitate; and this illusion of sufficiency may lead him with all sincerity to pray, "I thank thee that I am not as other men are", but the judgment of Jesus probes this illus-

ory judgment with its positive test. What has thou done? it asks. What gain has God from his investment in thy soul: what fruit from thy sowing; what added strength or peace or courage, through the loan of life committed to thy care; what fidelity as of the faithful steward; what watchfulness as of the trusted porter; what integrity as of the righteous judge? *Francis Greenwood Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.*

The Full Grain in the Ear. The full grain is the reproduction of that which came to us as seed; *i. e.* our lives yield a result which is a reproduction of the character of Jesus. This third stage is only partially reproduced in the best men in this life; but it *will* be perfectly attained. Much sun gives much wheat. Its warmth swells out and ripens the grain. So does love in the heart perfect and ripen the practice of good. There is no Christ-given thought which shall not also become Christ-like endeavor; and there is no Christ-like endeavor which shall fail to become an attained practical result. *R. Vaughan,* in *Stones from the Quarry.*

The Harvest is Sure. And when is the harvest to be? The answer is, when the corn is ripe, when it offers itself as the full, ripe corn in the ear. Not a moment is to be lost; from the time when the seed is sown it begins to grow; and as soon as it has stopped growing the sickle is put to it, and it is gathered in. And so, too, we each of us have been sent into the world to ripen for eternity; our whole life is but the time between sowing and ripening. And as soon as ever we are ripe, God puts in his sickle and gathers us. Sometimes the young and tender plant shows all its fruit, and he sees all its possibilities, accepts graciously unfulfilled intentions, and garners the bare promise of a glorious summer. The harvest of the world may be yet far off, but in our own selves it is always near. *Expository Times.*

II Missionary Topic The Great Optimist

The Promise of the Parable of the Mustard Seed. The kingdom of God had a very small beginning on earth. The kingdom came to earth in the person of the infant Christ. He died on the cross, despised and rejected of men. All hope seemed buried with him. But he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sent the Comforter into the hearts of his disciples, who went forth to carry out his great Commission of teaching the gospel to every creature. The kingdom is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: when it is grown it becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.

The little grain of mustard seed sent forth its two tender, almost invisible leaves and developed into twelve branches. The number of Christ's followers became five hundred; a short time afterward three thousand were baptized, and then Christianity spread throughout Palestine, Asia Minor, Greece, Rome. It grew to five hundred thousand in the first century, fifteen millions in the fifth. At the present time, of the sixteen hundred million people in the world more than five hundred million are counted Christians, and even those who are not themselves Christians acknowledge that in a Christian land there is greater safety and peace than elsewhere. The time is coming when there shall be but one fold and one Shepherd.

The Great Optimist. Jesus was the greatest Optimist the world has ever seen. At the time he spoke these parables nothing could have seemed more hopeless than the outlook for the growth of the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men, ignorant or prejudiced or absorbed as were the hearts with which he was dealing, yet he was confident of the triumphant progress of the kingdom. He never once doubted that his mission would succeed, however discouraging might seem to others the events of his life and death. His words were spoken, not written, he took not the slightest trouble to see that they were preserved in written form, but he knew that they were spirit and they were life, that they could not die. He was despised and rejected of men, but he knew the time would come when he would draw all men unto him. The kingdom was as a grain of mustard seed, a bit of leaven, but he looked confidently forward to the time when his little band of faithful followers would become the missionary heroes of all the ages. He believed in the great to-morrow. He was the Prophet of Hope.

The Missionary.

One planted a seed,—'twas a little thing
To sow in the field of his Lord and King,—
A grain of mustard. It grew and spread,
Till it sheltered the weary toiler's head;
And under its branches sweet songsters rare
Sang hymns of praise as they nested there.
And he who had planted the tiny seed
Forgot his shame at the humble deed.

And one gave his life,—'twas a little thing,
But 'twas all that he had to give to his King.
The Master sent him where darkness dwelt,
Where the Blind and Lame to strange idols knelt.
'Twas a lonely land; but he looked above
As he brought to the hopeless the message of love.

And many whose gropings had been in vain
To the life of the spirit were born again.
And his life, poured out for a world in need,
Was multiplied like the mustard seed!

William Merrill Vories, in *The Sunday School Times.*

Other Helpers. Among his schoolmates Count Zinzendorf formed a society which is called the "Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed." The badge was a ring of gold inscribed with this motto, "No man liveth unto himself." That little society was the grain that developed into a great tree with branches extending everywhere, for it became the great Moravian Brotherhood, a missionary organization that has blessed the world.

On a rock in Mission Park, Williamstown, Massachusetts, there is this inscription: "The field is the world; the birthplace of foreign missions." Here stood the famous "haystack" by which met five young men of Williams College in 1808 to form the first foreign Missionary Society of the United States. Everywhere the truth of the prophetic parable of the Mustard Seed is being verified.

III The Leavening Influence

The Meaning of the Parable of the Leaven. The breadmaker mixed the leaven in her mass of dough until every particle of it was changed. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? questioned Paul of the Corinthians. Each particle of leaven affects the particles next to it, these the next, and so on until the whole mass is permeated with the fermenting power, and the heavy lumps of dough have been changed into light loaves of bread ready for baking. Like the power of that leaven is the power of Christianity. The influence of the Christ spirit affects the whole life, transforming motives and character, and changes the whole world.

The Necessity for Mixing. Precisely as a fashion or a contagious disease passes from man to man with inconceivable and sometimes appalling rapidity, so does evil or good example propagate itself with as certain and speedy an increase. Our comfort is that the leaven of good is as surely propagated as the leaven of evil.

That it may be so, there must be a mixing. That is to say, there must be contact of the closest kind between those who are and those who are not the subjects of Christ. No good is done by the leaven while it lies by itself: it might as well be chalk or sand. It must be mixed with the flour. So must those who have the leaven of Christ in them not withdraw from the life of men, but be kneaded up together with all kinds of annoying and provoking and uncongenial and un-Christian people, that the spirit of Christ may be imparted to the world. Other things being equal the effect of Christian character varies with the thoroughness of the mixing. The depth of the love, the closeness of the intimacy, the frequency and thoroughness of the intercourse, is the measure of the effect produced. And this intimate mixing is accomplished largely by nature, which sets us in families and mixes us up in all the familiarities and

intimacies of domestic life; and by society, which compels us, in the prosecution of our ordinary callings, to come into contact with one another in a close and influential manner. One part of the world is "mixed" with other parts by commerce, by colonization, by conquest, so that there actually is a ceaseless giving and taking of good and evil. One generation also is mixed with others by reading their history and literary remains and by inheriting their traditions and long-established usages.

But beyond nature's provision, beyond the unavoidable contact with our fellow-men to which we are all compelled, there are voluntary friendships and associations into which we enter, and casual meetings into which we are unawares thrown. Such casual and passing acquaintanceships have frequently illustrated the truth of this parable, and have been the means of imparting the spirit of Christ in very unlikely quarters. *Dr. Marcus Dods,* in *Christ and Man.*

The Progress may be Slow. For weeks past some thousands of men, scattered throughout the country, have been awaiting the receipt of a four-word telegram from a hotel-keeper, a camp proprietor, or a favorite guide in the northern woods. "The ice is out." To those who receive the despatch it means the coming of long-expected and long-deferred pleasure. The lakes are open. The fishing season is on. It is time to pack the kit and start.

The going out of the ice is one of the annual miracles. For weeks the sun has been rising higher and higher, beating every day a little harder on the icy barriers; yet apparently it has had no effect. The surface of the lake is still unbroken, and so far as the eye can see, is unaffected by the advancing season. Only last week one might safely have driven across it. Even yesterday it was safe to walk on; but to-day the ice is out.

The miracle is constantly repeating itself in human life. Men see some cruel wrong, and address themselves to righting it. They give generously of time and money, work unselfishly year after year and perhaps become disheartened by the lack of interest and the slowness of the response. The mass of selfishness and indifference is so huge that it seems impossible for any sun of righteousness to thaw it. The evil still exists. Years of effort have made no visible mark upon it. What is the use of fighting any longer?

There is no use, because there is no more need. We wake some morning to find the battle won. The ice has been disintegrating, although we did not know it. A wind, hot with human passion,—a *Slocum* disaster, or a *Washington Place* fire,—has melted the mass in a night. *Youth's Companion.*

A Message to You. Is there nothing you can do, nothing you ought to do, in the way of leavening some little bit of the great mass? Come yourselves back to the lesson, cultivate diligently, conscientiously and faithfully, that fellowship with Christ himself, which is alone sufficient to equip you for this great calling. Make quite sure of your own acceptance of his spirit, and whatever you do, utter, touch, will all be leavened and communicate that gracious and all-blessing spirit. What is a Christian to *do* in order that his Christian spirit may be commmunicated to others? The answer is, he is to *be* a Christian; not to be anxious to show himself a Christian, but to be careful to be one. That is the very teaching of that parable which says: "Be a Christian and you cannot fail to make Christians or help to make them. Be leaven and you will leaven." The leaven does not need to say, "I am leaven;" nor to say to that which lies next to it, "Be thou leavened." By the inevitable communication of the properties of the leaven to that which lies beside it, and by this again infecting what is beyond, the whole, gradually and unseen, but naturally and certainly, is leavened. *Dr. Marcus Dods,* in *Christ and Man.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

God's word is a seed from which a fruit grows called Life! *Gaspari.*

If you are not leavening others with a right spirit, it is because you are yourself unleavened. *Marcus Dods.*

The harvest of the future is but the golden ripening of to-day's sowing. *H. W. Mabie.*

So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase...For we are God's fellow-workers. 1 Cor. 3.7, 9.

We find great things are made of little things,
And little things go lessening, till at last
Comes God behind them. · *Browning.*

Cast forth thy act, thy word, into the ever-living, ever-working universe; it is a seed grain that can not die; unnoticed to-day, it will be found flourishing as a banyan tree, perhaps, alas! as a hemlock forest—after a thousand years. *Carlyle.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Just as the healthy blade grows into the vigorous ear and then the vigorous ear grows into the full grain in the ear, so the boy and girl whose purposes are true grow into a Christian young manhood and young womanhood of lofty ideals and then into lives that yield a rich harvest of Christian service.

All three parables tell us not to be discouraged when the things of God get on slowly.

What are we doing to implant in heathen lives the leavening, transforming spirit of Christ?

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

In three parables Jesus showed that the growth of the kingdom of God was gradual and his disciples would have need of great patience, but the growth was sure and therefore they should be encouraged.

The parable of the Growing Grain presents a sower sowing seed upon the earth and then leaving it, sleeping at night and rising in the morning in the full knowledge that, though he could not understand how, the seed would spring up and grow—first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain was ripe, then he would come and harvest it.

The parable of the Mustard Seed presents a grain of mustard seed sown in the earth, which though a very small seed, grows into a very tall plant with branches large enough to afford a resting place for birds.

The parable of the Leaven presents a woman mixing a bit of leaven in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.

Like the growing grain, the mustard seed and the leaven is the kingdom of God.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Christianity leavening social, commercial, and political life.
2. The nature of the kingdom of God.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What were tares and what was their effect in food? (Clipping, page 280.) 2. What is the meaning of *haply?* (Dictionary.) 3. What do the verses omitted from our lesson contain? 4. When did James and John fail to remember the lesson of the parable of the Tares? (Lk. 9.51-56.) 5. What is the lesson of the parable of the Barren Fig Tree? (Lk. 13.6-8.) 6. Commit to memory Gal. 6.7 and 2 Cor. 5.10. 7. What is the aim of the Third Gospel? (Clipping, p. 31.) 8. What are its characteristics? (Clipping, p. 31.)

Questions to think about. 1. In an earlier lesson on the Sermon on the Mount Jesus uttered a warning against judging others, and gave a reason for not judging. What was it? 2. What reason for not judging is there in this parable? 3. How would John the Baptist have differed from Jesus in his treatment of tares? 4. Are there both "wheat" and "tares" in the individual heart? What is the best way to get rid of the tares? 5. Were there any tares among the wheat in the company of the twelve disciples? 6. What special lesson has the parable for you?

Note Book and Memory Work. Continue your note book work. See page 17. Commit to memory the Parable of the Tares and its explanation.

LESSON IV—JULY 28

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Golden Text

Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. Mt. 13.30

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 13.24-30, 36-43. The Wheat and the Tares. **T.** Gal. 3.1-14. Children of the Kingdom. **W.** John 8.31-44. Children of the Wicked One. **T.** Gal. 4.1-10. Children or Servants. **F.** John 15.1-10. How to Bear Good Fruit. **S.** Matt. 25.41-46. Cursing. **S.** Matt. 25. 31-40. Blessing. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 13.24-30, 36-43 COMMIT vv 37-39

24 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is
likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field: 25 but while men slept,
his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. 26 But
when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.
27 And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou
not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? 28 And he said
unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt
thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he saith, Nay; lest haply
while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. 30 Let both
grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to
the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them;
but gather the wheat into my barn.
36 Then he left the multitudes, and went into the house: and his disciples
came unto him, saying, Explain unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37
And he answered and said, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man:
38 and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the
kingdom: and the tares are the sons of the evil *one;* 39 and the enemy that
sowed them is the devil: and the harvest is the end of the world; and the
reapers are angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned
with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. 41 The Son of man shall send
forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that
cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, 42 and shall cast them into the
furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. 43 Then
shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He
that hath ears let him hear.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

24-30. *Another parable.* This is one of several parables grouped together in Mt. 13.—*Them.* The multitude on the shore, Mt. 13.2, 3.—*While men slept.* All unperceived.—*Tares.* Or, *darnel,* RVm. A weed which closely resembles wheat in the early stage of its growth, but after the ears are formed the two are easily distinguished. The grain of the darnel is smaller than that of the wheat and its kernel is black and bitter.—*The servants of the householder.* Greek, *bond servants,* RVm. Jesus omits them in his interpretation of the parable; they have, then, no special meaning for us.—*An enemy hath done this.* Greek, *a man that is an enemy,* RVm. Dr. Joseph Parker quotes Tyndale's Version—an envious person hath done this—and comments, It seems to bring the text nearer to us and to make it appallingly English.—*Haply.* Perhaps, perchance.—*Ye root up the wheat with them.* The roots of wheat and tares

would become intertwined. John the Baptist wished to root up tares as soon as discovered.

36-39. Verses 31-33 give the parables of the Mustard Seed and of the Leaven, and verses 34 and 35 Matthew's statement that the parables of Jesus fulfilled a prophecy. *The house.* Mt. 13.1.—*Explain unto us the parable.* Compare Mt. 15.15, 16.—*The Son of man.* See Jn. 12.34; Lk. 22.69, 70. The phrase is used only by Jesus himself, and by Stephen in Acts 7.56.—*The field is the world.* Therefore not the church alone.—*The end of the world.* Many ancient authorities omit *of the world,* RVm. The consummation of the age, is another reading suggested in the margin of the English Revised Version.

41-43. *Shall send forth his angels.* See Mt. 24.31.—*Into a furnace of fire.* Compare Dan. 3.6. This figure of fire for punishment is probably drawn from the constant fire kept burning in the valley of Gehenna, or Tophet, by Jerusalem, to burn the refuse cast there.—*There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.* "Jesus departs from the image of fire consuming the tares, to introduce another thought of horror, and heighten the terrible picture. The use of various images to describe future punishment should prevent a crude literalism" (*Broadus*).—*The righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom.* Compare Dan. 12.3: And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

28. *Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?* We cannot think that the master looked at his eager servants disapprovingly, although he could not let them do what they wanted to do. The man who never wanted it would be but a poor kind of man. He whose heart has never burned within him to do one great thing which should break the chain which binds the world's sin to the world, and let the great black mass fall into the bottomless pit forever; he who has never longed for one sublime and final act of self-sacrifice which might unravel the twisted cords of evil in his own soul and set it free; he who has never known these great desires has lived but a meagre life. There are times when it all seems so possible, so easy. Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? We feel a certain chivalrous spirit in the words. It is the young knight's confidence in his good cause and his strong arm. It is the grasp of the victory before the first sword-stroke has been given. Let us ride out this bright morning and settle this troublesome business once for all.

Christ loves that spirit we must certainly believe. When he puts out his hand in hindrance and says No! it is not that he is displeased. "Nay," he says, "it may not be," but yet he blesses and approves the men who want to do it. And then he proceeds to teach these men how much more difficult and deeper is the task than they thought and to claim their enthusiasm for the harder duty of patience and delay. *Phillips Brooks,* in *New Starts in Life.*

37. *The Son of man.* The great men of any particular country do not appeal to people of other lands as they do to those of their own. Shakespeare, for instance, could never have sprung up in France. He is the very incarnation and expression of Elizabethan England. Victor Hugo could not have come into being in England; he is French in form and diction and idea. Or to take another illustration not from literature. Both England and France at certain stages of their history handed over their destines to the control of military dictators. But, as Bishop Chadwick says, Napoleon would have been absolutely intolerable in England, while Cromwell would have been ridiculous in France.

The greatest men are the children of their land. They are parochial, not universal. But it is not so with Jesus Christ. Nothing peculiarly Jewish runs through any word or institution of his. There is no need to make any allowance for the oriental bent of mind. He speaks to us in our English Bible to-day. Has any one of you detected a foreign accent in his speech? Oh, no! He speaks to us in the language in which we were born. And what is true of us is true of all men: He is brother to them all. He is the Son of man. He belongs not to Judea, but to the world. *J. D. Jones,* in *Elims of Life.*

41. *The Son of man shall send forth his angels.* The heart of the matter is not the "how" nor "where" nor the "when;" it is this—that Jesus Christ, be-

cause he is the Son of man, is at once Judge and Standard of Judgment: sometime, somehow, somewhere, we are to see ourselves as we compare or contrast with him.—*J. M. E. Ross.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

25. *While men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.* Trench, in his work on the Parables, states how common such a work of revenge is in oriental lands, and then adds that it has been known nearer home. He instances the case of an evicted tenant in Ireland who sowed wild oats in the field he was leaving, which it was almost impossible to get rid of, because they ripened and seeded themselves before the crops did with which they were mingled.

30. *Until the harvest.* The Germans call tares *Schwindelkorn,* dizzy grain, because if ground into flour and eaten as bread they cause a dizzy sickness that is worse than seasickness. "Flour of mixed wheat and tares cannot be given even to animals," says W. H. Thomson in "Parables and Their Home." Hence all the baskets of wheat are carried from the threshing floor to the flat roofs of the houses, where they are emptied out on mats, and the tedious separation of grain from grain is carried on, sometimes for days, until the wheat is finally rid of this unhappy admixture. On one occasion, after an early start from a village in Mount Hermon, I felt a dizzy headache coming on which made me uncertain on my horse. My two Arab companions soon complained of the same trouble, till one of them said that he knew by experience what the matter was."The women of the village where we got bread this morning were too lazy to get all the zowan (tares) out of the wheat. May their days be shortened."

42. *The furnace of fire.* Sir Francis Younghusband, writing in "India and Tibet," says that an interesting detail of the religion of the natives is that their hell is not hot, but cold, for if it were hot the inhabitants of frozen Tibet would all wish to flock there.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The parable of the Tares was spoken from the boat to the crowd by the seaside immediately after the interpretation of the parable of the Sower was given to the disciples. Jesus then went to the house in Capernaum where he was wont to stay, and there gave his disciples the explanation.

Assign paragraphs 157, 80-84, *In The Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

The interpretation of this parable, verses 36-43, is too difficult for your pupils. Use the parable itself, verses 24-30, teaching it so that your pupils will never forget it. Take as your lesson truth the thought that every heart, like that field, has both good and evil seeds, and that we must cultivate the good seeds so that there will be no room for the evil. Begin with an expanded account of Mark Twain's weeding, next paragraph. Jesus taught his disciples by means of a story that they must be careful not to pull up the flowers, only instead of a flower-bed with weeds and flowers his story had a field of good and bad grain. Teach the story. Use the object lesson that Mr. Moody gave, page 282, to show how to get rid of the bad seeds in the heart. Make definite what are the good seeds which your pupils must cultivate—truthfulness, kindness, reverence, etc. Tell about the boy who seemed to have more evil than good in him, but who cultivated the good till he became the great missionary who did so much for China, page 281.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger and Older Pupils. When Mark Twain was a young boy he was sent by his mother to weed a flower-bed. He found more weeds than flowers and came back and asked his mother if instead of weeding the flower-bed he might not "flower the weed-bed." One of the parables given by Jesus

is a warning against the danger of "flowering a weed bed." What is the parable called? To whom was it spoken? When and where? What is the parable?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Forbearance

The Lesson of the Parable. The tares are not to be uprooted as soon as they make their appearance; they are to be allowed to grow till the harvest. In God's own time the tares and wheat will be separated and the evil and the good shall go to the place for which each has been preparing. This has not been man's way. Again and again down the ages the righteous have passed judgment on the unrighteous and have set themselves up to execute judgment, as would the servants of the husbandman if they had been allowed their way, as would Peter and John when they asked, "Wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven and consume them," the Samaritans. The kingdom of heaven does not grow by force. Jesus allowed Judas to remain one of the twelve long after he knew he was disloyal. The little child who said she had been helping God, for she saw a flower going to blossom and she "blossomed it," did what men would do who have not the patience of the Lord of the harvest. His fan was in his hand, as John the Baptist had foretold, but he did not wield it during his earthly ministry. We must learn his patience, patience with others' shortcomings and with our own, if we are to be pleasing unto God.

There is no really Hopeless Case. In the realm of nature the tares never can become wheat, but in the kingdom of God there are multitudes of what were apparently tares, cases of utter depravity, that have been changed into wheat, messengers of God. This is the greatest reason why we should exercise forbearance in God's field. This condensation by Miss Belle Brain of an account in "The Children's Record" is an interesting illustration: Some years ago in a manufacturing town of Scotland, a young lady applied to the superintendent of a Sunday-school for a class. At his suggestion she gathered a class of poor boys. The superintendent told them to come to his house during the week and he would get them each a new suit of clothes. They came and were nicely fitted out.

The worst and most unpromising boy in the class was a lad named Bob. After two or three Sundays he was missed and the teacher went to hunt him up. She found that his new clothes were torn and dirty, but she invited him back to the school and he came.

The superintendent gave him a second new suit, but after attending once or twice, his place was again empty. Once more she sought him out, only to find that the second suit had gone the way of the first.

"I am utterly discouraged about Bob," she said when she reported the case to the superintendent, "and must give him up."

"Please don't do that," the superintendent answered; "I can't but hope that there is something good in Bob. Try him once more. I'll give him a third suit of clothes if he'll promise to attend regularly."

Bob did promise and received his third new suit. He attended regularly after that and got interested in the school. He became an earnest and persevering seeker after Jesus. He found him. He joined the church. He was made a teacher. He studied for the ministry.

And the end of the story is that that discouraging boy—that forlorn, ragged, runaway Bob—became the Rev. Robert Morrison, the great missionary to China, who translated the Bible into the Chinese language, and by so doing opened the kingdom of heaven to the teeming millions of that vast country.

Take Care! In one of the Continental museums is a fine marble statue which was found broken into hundreds of pieces. The fragments were carefully collected, and with infinite care and patience fitted together; at length a seemingly impossible task was accomplished, and the statue stands in all its original completeness and beauty, none the worse for the smash and the long burial in the dust. It is a parable of Christ's ability to restore sadly shattered souls. Mind in whose face you shut the door! Take care what fractured ves-

sel you heedlessly fling to the rubbish in the void! There is no heresy like that of looking with incredulity on souls gone wrong. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Education of the Heart.*

The Minister's Reward. A distinguished minister once insisted on holding a poor drunken wretch to the church in spite of the protests of the other members. The wretch died in the church, a wretch to the last. The minister's patience went for nothing, everybody said—everybody except the minister; for the dead transgressor's children all came into the church and began Christian lives, "because," they said, "the minister was so good to father." No, patience with imperfection is not poor business. *Dr. Francis J. McConnell,* in *Sunday School Journal.*

Tolerance in the Churches. Even in these days of liberty our attitude towards those who differ from us, or who depart from the accepted standards on theological questions leaves something to be desired. It is unfortunate that it should not be possible to discuss differences of view in matters of religion without acrimony and bitterness. This is sometimes excused as being testimony to the vast importance of the issues involved. There are churches that were cradled in intoleration. Can they still say with Owen, "I believe that upon search it will appear that error hath not been advanced by anything in the world so much as by usurping a power for its suppression?" We are forgetting that it is possible even in Free Churches to create an atmosphere which may become a weapon of persecution and a means of suppressing the truth. Tares will always be found among the wheat, and the attempt to root them up prematurely is always perilous. "Let both grow together until the harvest." Toleration springs not out of indifference to the truth, as is sometimes said, but out of the belief that God's truth is too big a thing to be wholly expressed in any of our formulas. Condensed from *Aspects of Christ,* by *W. B. Selbie.*

II What to do With Our Tares

A Mixture of Good and Evil in Everyone. One of the Roman emperors by a strange turn of fortune was brought directly from prison to the throne, and as a smith could not at once be found the emperor sat for several hours on the throne of the Cæsars with iron fetters still on his limbs. "Do not Christians sometimes remind us of this strange sight?" questions a forcible writer refering to this historical fact. "Their soul is brought out of prison, but relics of the old degradation cleave to them still, and the royal signs and ornaments of virtue strangely mingle with half-broken fetters of evil." Not only are there people represented by the wheat and others represented by the tares in the field of the world, but good and evil are commingled in the field of every individual heart.

A Parable. Have you never noticed how old, dead leaves sometimes still cling to oak trees in winter? Wind and snow and sleet have failed to dislodge them. But with the return of spring life begins to awaken in the trees, new leaves begin to form, and this new growth quickly pushes off the old, useless, dead foliage. Like those trees are human hearts. There are old growths of evil which persistently refuse to yield to any attempt to annihilate them, but let the new life of the spirit of Christ awaken the heart, and so vigorous will be the resultant new growth of good that it will soon force out the growth of evil.

An Object Lesson. Mr. Moody in an address took a tumbler and explained that it was full of air which could not be poured out nor dipped out, for as fast as a spoonful was taken out other air flowed in to take its place. In the same way, he said, the human heart is full of sin and efforts to remove it are unsuccessful. But there is one sure and simple way of removing the air from the tumbler, and Mr. Moody showed this by seizing a pitcher of water and filling the tumbler full to the brim—there was no more air left therein. When a human heart is filled to overflowing with God's Spirit, there is no room left there for sin.

The Battle of Moral Germs. It is encouraging to know that there are germs friendly to health and life as well as those which produce disease. Much is being done to guard against the latter and much still remains to be done; but little has been done in the way of cultivating and employing the friendly germ.

Perhaps in the future people will find their chief security in their understanding of these invisible allies of life rather than in direct resistance of the attacking forces. There is little doubt that we will discover that in this realm of the microscopic and invisible the things which are for us are greater than those that are against us. And we are coming to know that this is true in the moral world. There are friendly and unfriendly moral germs and the issues of moral life are determined by the ceaseless war between these hostile forces. We are learning more and more the value of moral antiseptics and disinfectants; but we have a great deal yet to learn concerning the beneficent moral forces and how to use them for the prevention or cure of moral diseases. The world's future moral safety will depend upon the cultivation of the germs of good. Perhaps there is a deeper scientific meaning than we have supposed in Paul's words, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Medical science is saying that the germs of disease are best destroyed by the germs of health. In the physical and moral spheres it is a battle of the germs. *Editorial, Adult Teacher.*

III To His Own Place

The Divine Judgment is not Capricious nor Arbitrary.

O thou, wha in the heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thysel',
Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell,
A' for thy glory,
And no for onie guid or ill
They've done afore thee!

In these famous lines Burns satirizes the thought that God is a capricious God, that it will make no difference in the hereafter what lives we have led here, that we do not reap what we have sown. In the more famous parable of the Tares Jesus taught the truth which Paul expressed in these words: For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ: that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. In the parable the wheat is gathered into the barn. Where else does good wheat belong? And the tares are bound in bundles and burnt. What else could one do with evil tares?

The Principle of the Divine Judgment. We might have expected that all the figures of dread and all images of terror would have been heaped together to describe the end of him who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Mediæval Christianity did, as a matter of fact, employ every terrible figure imagination could invent to describe the doom of Judas. Dante, for instance, divides his hell into nine circles; and in the fourth division of the ninth circle, where the torture is keenest and most awful, there he places Judas.

But Scripture satisfies itself with this simple, solemn sentence: "He fell, that he might go to his own place." How simple the words are, and yet how awful! Dante's lurid lines about the tortures of Judas do not fill me with terror as does this restrained but solemn Scripture sentence. The worst and most hardened sinner can meet with no punishment more dread than this—to be sent to his own place.

In these words we have the principle of the divine judgment. That is what happens at the judgment—every man finds his own place; every man occupies the station he deserves; every man joins the company he loves. That is the principle of the divine judgment—every man finds his level and goes to his own place.

Would that you could realize how solemn and vital a truth this is! We all hope somehow or other to find our way into heaven at last. But there is no getting into heaven by magic. Take this deep statement of that great moralist, Bishop Butler, and ponder over it: "Habit makes character—character settles destiny." Character settles destiny. Where you shall be depends on what you are. Condensed from *Elims of Life* by *J. D. Jones.*

Men will be sorted there. Gravitation will come into play undisturbed; and the pebbles will be ranged according to their weights on the great shore where the sea has cast them up, as they are upon Chesil beach, down there in the English Channel; all the big ones together, and sized off to the smaller ones,

regularly and steadily laid out. Like draws to like. Our spiritual affinities, our religious and moral character, will settle where we shall be and who our companions will be when we get yonder. Some of us would not altogether like to live with the people that are like ourselves, and some of us would not find the result of this sorting to be very delightful. Men in the Dantesque circles were only made more miserable because all around them were of the same sort, and some of them worse than themselves. And an ordered hell, with no company for the liar but liars, and none for the thief but thieves, and none for impure men but the impure, and none for the godless but the godless, would be a hell indeed. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Similes and Figures.*

The Closed Gate. Miss Frey recounts the story told by a woman in Chong Dong, Seoul, at a recent prayer-meeting. The Sunday-school children were to have their first picnic, which only those with tickets could attend. As the woman was putting up a lunch for her little girl she decided to go with her to the picnic, although she had no ticket. She thought that in some way she would be able to get into the grounds with the others, but the guard pushed her back, as he received and counted the tickets. One by one, all filed through; and when the last had gone in, the big gate swung shut. She looked through the crack and called loudly. Surely the teacher would hear and intercede for her, but no one heard her appeal. All, even her own little girl, went happily along over the green grass, among the trees laden with blossoms, but she was left out. It all came over her in a flash, that if she did not believe Jesus she would be shut out of heaven some day. Her own daughter would go in without her, and so would the teacher and many others whom she knew; and though she might call to them they could not help her. She must have a ticket, and that ticket was the blood of Jesus cleansing the heart. There, that day, she decided for Christ. She almost shouted for joy as she told how she had been led into the kingdom.

May I not fear the Verdict. Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell closes his helpful book entitled "Down to the Sea" with these words: God grant that when I come up for inspection, when my voyage is over, I may not fear the verdict. May the log-book record many a brother helped, and saved. For though he will see—as see he will—the dints in the planking and the scratches on the paint and spars—yes, even if they speak to him while they remind us of the sorry contact with rock and shoal—still we have confidence to believe that there will be nothing to dread from him.

"Yes, yes, skipper: God bless the old ship. Let her be inspected, I say, just as she is."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Forbearing one another in love. Eph. 4.2.

Whatever our stage in the divine progress may be, our main business is to grow, to bring our fruit to its ripe maturity, not to judge the neighboring stalks. *Samuel Cox.*

Overturn a man's wrongdoing but do not overturn him unless it must be done in overturning the wrong. *Lincoln.*

The tare is not only the foe of the wheat, but the wheat is the foe of the tare. *Dr. Francis J. McConnell.*

You will find it less easy to uproot faults than to choke them by gaining virtues. *Ruskin.*

The history of the world is the judgment of God. *Schiller.*

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. 3.9.

We should call a man who could sit on a barrel of gunpowder smoking a pipe, a rather unbalanced sort of man; so is the man who lives in this world thoughtless of the next. *George R. Hewitt.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Are you ever tempted to sow tares in another's field, to do another an injury because of envy or desire for revenge?

Can you distinguish tares from wheat? Have you a right to judge others? Have you a reason for being charitable toward wrong doers?

The good seed are the sons of the kingdom: the tares are the sons of the evil one. The parable forces the thought upon the mind of each one of us, Whose child am I? I am in the growing field of the world, a plant of wheat or a tare. If I am seeking to do the will of the Father, then I am wheat; if I am led by the spirit of evil, then I am a tare.

The miracle that is not possible in the vegetable kingdom is possible in the spiritual kingdom: tares may not become wheat, but sons of the evil one may become sons of the kingdom.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

One of the parables of the kingdom spoken by Jesus to the crowd upon the shore of the Sea of Galilee is that of the Tares. A man sowed good seed in his field, but unperceived his enemy sowed tares among the wheat, so that when the wheat bore fruit the tares also appeared. His servants wished to uproot the tares at once but their master forbade this, for they might root up the wheat as well as the tares. Both were to grow together till the harvest, and then his reapers would bind the tares in bundles and burn them, and store the wheat in his barns.

Jesus withdrew from the crowd and entered his house in Capernaum. The disciples followed and asked him to explain the parable of the Tares of the Field. The sower of the good seed is the Son of man, he said; and the disciples gained a new thought about their Lord. The field is the world: and this thought of his world-wide power they did not grasp. The good seed are the sons of the kingdom and the tares are the sons of the evil one: and they must have asked themselves which were they. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil: and then they understood better why their Master's work of sowing good seed progressed so slowly. At the time of harvest—the end of the world—the workers of iniquity shall be punished and the righteous rewarded in the kingdom of their Father; and they learned that judgment is the Lord's part, forbearance man's; and they learned, too, why Jesus, that very morning, had allowed himself to be insulted and had let the matter pass with a solemn word of warning. He that hath ears let him hear, added Jesus to them: and they realized that they, too, were in need of warning.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

How to deal with the evil in the kingdom of God.
The claims made by Jesus in this parable.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Was it common to find buried treasures in Palestine? (Clipping, page 289.) 2. Describe the way in which the net was used. (Clipping, page 288.) 3. What was a scribe? 4. What is the value of membership in the kingdom as told in Mk. 8.36? 5. Whom did Jesus advise to sell all that he had in order to enter the kingdom? (Mt. 19.21.) 6. What narratives and parables are found only in Luke? (Clipping, p. 32.) 7. What is its order? (Clipping, p. 32.) 8. What is its style? (Clipping, p. 32.)

Questions to think about. 1. How many parables have we already studied, and by what is each one called? 2. How many pictures of the kingdom in this lesson? 3. What is a treasure? 4. What is the difference in the teaching of the parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price? (Clipping, page 289.) 5. What is the pearl of great price? (Clipping, page 290.) 6. What earlier parable resembles in its teaching that of the parables of the Net? 7. How does each differ in its emphasis of the same truth? (Clipping, page 286.) 8. What is the meaning of verse 52? (Clipping, page 287.) 9. Who is the King and who are the subjects in the kingdom of heaven? 10. By whom was the kingdom established on earth?

Note Book and Memory Work. Continue your Note Book Work. See page 17. Commit to memory the parables in the next lesson.

LESSON V—AUGUST 4

THE WORTH OF THE KINGDOM

Golden Text

Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Mt. 6.33

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 13.44-53. The Worth of the Kingdom. **T.** Matt. 6.25-34. Seeking the Kingdom. **W.** Luke 12.13-20. The Rich Fool. **T.** Gen. 25.27-34. A Bad Bargain. **F.** Luke 14.16-24. Value of the Kingdom not Appreciated. **S.** Heb. 5.1-10. Through Self-sacrifice to Exaltation. **S.** Phil. 3.1-12. All for Christ. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 13.44-53 READ Mt. 8.24-27; Luke 8.23-25 COMMIT vv 45, 46

44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which
a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and
buyeth that field.
45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seek-
ing goodly pearls: 46 and having found one pearl of great price he went and
sold all that he had, and bought it.
47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea,
and gathered of every kind: 48 which, when it was filled, they drew up on
the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad
they cast away. 49 So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall
come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, 50 and shall cast
them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of
teeth.
51 Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea. 52 And
he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to
the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, who bringeth
forth out of his treasure things new and old.
53 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed
thence.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

44. *A treasure hidden in the field.* See Light from Oriental Life.—*In his joy.* Or, *for joy thereof,* RVm.—*Selleth all that he hath.* In the interpretation of the parable, it means that the finder gives up everything that prevents his whole-hearted enjoyment of the treasure, of Christ.—*Buyeth that field.* That the treasure legally belonged to the man in whose field it was found is a moral point not considered in any way in the parable. A parable is given to teach one central truth, and should not be considered in all its possible bearings on other truths.

45. *Seeking goodly pearls.* "This parable describes a man who all his life long has been in the pursuit of truth and at last finds it. Such a one was the philosopher Justine, who, dissatisfied with all the schools of pagan philosophy, found rest for his soul in Christ." It is very like the parable of the Hidden Treasure, though in that parable the prize is found as a surprise, while in this only after diligent seeking. It was especially natural for a Jewish teacher to give two illustrations of the same truth, says Dr. Broadus, since the more elevated Hebrew style tends always to parallelisms.

47. *A net.* Greek, *drag-net,* RVm. See Light from Oriental Life.—*Of every kind.* Both good and bad. This parable is a companion one to that of the Tares, with the difference that in the latter the emphasis is upon what should be done in this life, while here the emphasis is upon what will be done in the

future life. Possibly Matthew narrated this parable last in order to close the series with the picture of the judgment.—*Gathered the good into vessels.* "The value of the tare which cannot yet be estimated, will be ascertained by and by, the whole results of the work of Christ in the world will then but not sooner be known" (*Dods*).

52. *Therefore.* Since you have understood, as you say, you will therefore have no difficulty in understanding this.—*Every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven.* "The kingdom of heaven is here personified. It is viewed as the teacher, and, just as young men who desired to be scribes resorted to the Scribal College, the Home of Midrash, and sat at the feet of the Rabbis, so the Christian Scribe must go to school to the Kingdom of Heaven and receive its instruction. And this means that he must sit at Jesus' feet. Compare Lk. 10.39. Jesus is the teacher. Thus 'a scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven' signifies a religious teacher who has sat at Jesus' feet, learned his method, and caught his spirit" (*David Smith*).—*Bringeth forth.* The Greek word ἐκβάλλει means *hurls forth,* eagerly.—*Things new and old.* Jewish scribes taught only things old, the Law and the Prophets: Christian scribes were to add to this the new teachings which they learned from their Master.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

49. *So shall it be in the end of the world.*

Forever round the mercy-seat,
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?
What if thine eye refuse to see
Thine ear of heaven's free welcome fail,
And thou a willing captive be
Thyself thine own dark jail?
O doom beyond the saddest guess,
As the long years of God unroll,
To make thy dreary selfishness
The prison of a soul. *Whittier.*

52. *Who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* The occasion of this saying was a fresh departure which Jesus had made. He had begun to teach by parables. It was a new method with Jesus, but it was by no means original. It had been much employed by the ancient prophets, and the rabbis were very fond of it. This would rather commend it to Jesus, who was ever wont, if haply he might reach the hearts of his contemporaries, to adapt himself to their ways, linking new things to the old and making the old stepping stones to the new; but it would surprise his disciples. His teaching had hitherto been absolutely unique, amazing all who heard it, and impressing them with a sense of its authority (Mt. 7.28-29). It was "a new teaching" (Mk. 1.27), utterly unlike that of the scribes, and, when he adopted the common method, it would seem to the disciples that he was descending to the level of the scribes and becoming a teacher of the common order. And there was this danger in the new departure, that the familiarity of the method might conceal the originality of the message. Jesus knew what his disciples were thinking, and he inquired: "Have ye taken in all these things?" "Yes," they replied, their glibness betraying how imperfectly they had comprehended what they had heard. "On this account," he said, "every scribe that hath been made a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who bringeth forth from his store things new and things old." *David Smith,* in *The Expository Times.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

45. *A merchant seeking goodly pearls.* Both in ancient times and in the Orient to this day the search of a merchant for goodly pearls is one which commonly entails much personal hardship and danger. Whether on the shores

of the Red Sea or of the Persian Gulf, where the pearls are obtained from the fishermen, those regions have always had an evil repute for the character of their inhabitants. Even in Bagdad or in Damascus, the life of a man known to be carrying a pearl of great price about him would not be safe for an hour. Often, therefore, these possessors of costly pearls disguise themselves, and accompany caravans as poor religious beggars or pilgrims, while they may have secreted in their bosoms more than what would buy all the goods of their companions. We need not wonder, therefore, that the man himself becomes an enthusiast over the preciousness of the treasure. *W. H. Thomson,* in *The Parables by the Lake.*

46. *One pearl of great price.* In all ages the pearl really possessing the purest tints outranks in costliness all except a very few diamonds. Julius Cæsar gave one such to Servilia, the sister of Cato, for which he paid a sum equal to $223,000 of our money. The famous pearl which Cleopatra dissolved at a feast, and then drank to the health of Mark Antony, was one of a pair set in earrings, and said to be worth $400,000 of our money when the purchasing power of money was ten or fifteen times as great as now. *Harper's Classical Dictionary.*

47. *A net that was cast into the sea.* This was an oblong net of immense length, employed near the shore. The bottom edge was weighted with lead, and swept the bottom of the sea. The upper edge floated on the surface of the sea, supported by corks. Escape from it was impossible, and when it was dragged to shore, it contained every fish in the area of the sea which it had swept. *One Volume Commentary.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The first in the group of parables given by Matthew as uttered by the Sea of Galilee, that of the Sower, showed the different reception of the Word by its hearers, and the second, that of the Tares, showed the intermingling of the good and the bad in human society; both emphasized the number of those without the kingdom of heaven, and would naturally tend to dishearten the disciples. The next two parables, that of the Mustard Seed and that of the Leaven, showed the vital, transforming force inherent in the kingdom that shall work its ultimate expansion; they would tend to encourage the disciples. The third pair of parables, that of the Hidden Treasure and that of the Pearl of Great Price then followed. These show the supreme value of the kingdom, and must have been an incentive to the disciples to "covet earnestly the best gifts." The parable of the Net, which closes this series of parables, is a companion to that of the Tares, and emphasizes the fact of judgment with reward or punishment: it must have been to the disciples a most solemn warning.

Assign paragraphs 157, 85-87, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

I wonder if some one has ever told you that "You paid too much for your whistle" when you have made what that one thinks a bad bargain? That is what Benjamin Franklin did once when he was a boy. His friends had filled his pockets with coppers and he went out to spend them. The first thing he saw in a toy shop was a wooden whistle; he wanted it very much, and he offered the man in the shop all the money he had. The man took the money and gave him the whistle. He blew the whistle all the morning, and then got tired of it. Then he found out that he had paid four times as much for it as it was worth, and he thought all the afternoon of other toys that he would rather have had of which he would not have tired so soon. Benjamin Franklin paid too much for a whistle. All boys and girls sometimes do that very thing, pay too much for what will not give them pleasure long. Have you not heard how the Indian chiefs, who lived in this country when the first settlers came, gave away acres of land for a few glass beads? Benjamin Franklin and those Indian chiefs made bad bargains, for they gave up what was worth much for what was worth little. Jesus taught his disciples to make a good bargain, to give up something that was worth much for something that was worth far more. He taught this lesson by a parable which we call the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price.

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Eugène Burnand

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Teach the parable, and then tell the story of Eldad's search, page 291, making sure that your pupils understand the lessons there taught that the wonderful pearl is the knowledge of Christ which leads one to try to do Christ-like deeds. Do not teach the other parables of the lesson, as one will be all that your pupils can properly consider at one time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever hear of Captain Kidd's treasure? Where was it said to have been buried? When? (In the eighteenth century, somewhere between points a thousands miles apart on the Atlantic coast.) Has anyone ever searched for it? Have you ever read a story in which this supposed buried treasure figured? Palestine is said to contain many buried treasures. Said Dr. Wm. H. Thomson: Scarcely a year passed of my residence there in which I did not hear of discoveries of buried treasures. Once I bought several silver coins of the Seleucidæ of Antioch from a considerable collection of them which some children found shining in a mole-hill near a village of Upper Galilee, and on another occasion, not a hundred yards from our house in Sidon, a soldier found an earthen jar full of old Turkish gold coins which were struck by the early sultans. The reason for these frequent discoveries is not far to seek. For more than forty centuries it has been a common practice with the inhabitants of that country to bury their silver and their gold whenever a war or an oppressor threatened them with the loss of all they had; and when we consider how often in the history of that land cities and towns have been captured, and the inhabitants either all massacred or sold as slaves, it is no wonder that the secret of such hidden treasures in multitudes of instances perished with those who buried them. Jesus drew his parables from common, familiar things, and it was most natural that one of them should be about a hidden treasure. What is the parable?

For Older Pupils. A coolie who had been in South Africa returned to Tientsin bringing with him a letter from a church in the Transvaal. "Before I went to Africa," he said, 'I never was inside a church or chapel and I hated the Christians. During the Boxer trouble I was a red-handed Boxer; but I went to South Africa and, while I made a bit of silver there, I found the pearl of great price." What did he mean by that expression? Give the parable. What other parable is much like it in meaning? Tell the parable of the Hidden Treasure. What is the lesson that each teaches? What different meaning is there in each?

Show your pupils M. Eugene Burnand's remarkably fine picture facing this lesson, and repeat to them these words of the artist spoken at a religious conference in France: "There can be no fruitful service without intense interior preparation. Shall there not be among the artists of the twentieth century some who will seek in personal communion with God, in the discipline of the gospel fully accepted, a new vigor which will place that heart out of which proceed the issues of life under the constant influence of the Spirit?" Such a heart has our artist, and this picture is a confession of faith, for the face of the man bending over the microscope with which he is examining the priceless pearl, is that of M. Burnand himself.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Entering the Kingdom

Two Ways. The parables of the Hidden Treasure and of the Pearl of Great Price are alike in their valuation of the treasure, that it is worth all that one possesses, but they differ in the way in which the treasure is discovered. In the one case it is found, seemingly by accident; in the other it is secured only after long search. And in these two ways one may enter into the kingdom of heaven, become a subject of the King, obedient to his will, that kingdom which Christ came to found upon earth.

The First Way. The rustic had probably plodded across the field a hundred times and was doing it for the hundred and first time, or perhaps was at work there with his mattock or his homely plough. And, perchance, some

stroke of the spade, or push of the coulter, went a little deeper than usual, and there flashed the gold; or some shower of rain came on, and washed away a little of the superincumbent soil, and laid bare the bag. Now, that is what often happens, for you have to remember that though you are not seeking God, God is always seeking you, and so the great saying comes to be true, "I am found of them that sought me not." There have been many cases like the one of the man who, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, with no thought in his mind except to bind the disciples and bring them captive to Jerusalem, saw suddenly a light from heaven flashing down upon him, and a Voice that pulled him up in the midst of his career. Ah! it would be an awful thing if no one found Christ except those who set out to seek for him. Like the dew on the grass "that waiteth not for men, nor tarrieth for the sons of men," he often comes to hearts that are thinking about nothing less than about him. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Expositions of Scripture.*

When Wendell Phillips was asked how he had ever found God, he replied: When I was a boy of fourteen years of age, in the old church at the North End, I heard Lyman Beecher preach on the theme, "You belong to God." I went home after that service, threw myself on the floor in my room, with locked doors, and prayed: "O God, I belong to thee. Take what is thine own. I ask this, that whenever a thing is wrong, it may have no power of temptation over me, and that whenever a thing is right it may take no courage to do it." Thus he entered the kingdom.

One day a girl of sixteen sat reading the life of a noble Christian woman. "That was a beautiful life," she said to herself as she finished the book. "And I should like to live such a life," she added, after further thought. "Lord, I will try from this time onward," was her prayer a few moments later. She had entered the kingdom.

The Second Way. Kil, even at the early age of ten, realized that the world was unsatisfying. At school he was continually looking for some new doctrine, listening eagerly to the conversation of teachers and occasional visitors in the hope that some helpful new teaching would be revealed. At seventeen, still seeking, he went into business in Pyeng Yang, at the same time studying medicine. While going about the country as a merchant he was reminded of an old Korean belief that some time a great teacher would appear. Then he began seeking for this great teacher. He found a man who recommended Buddhism and for seven years Kil earnestly sought the light. He took a book of Buddhist prayers to a solitary place in the mountains to study. Each year he gave up his business and spent from twenty to a hundred days in that solitary spot, seeking the Truth.

Finally, a comrade told him of Pastor Moffett, who was preaching a doctrine which told of a good place to go to after death. He did not think much of this new doctrine, but nevertheless took the pains to seek out Dr. Moffett and inquire concerning it. Dr. Moffett told him of Christ and gave him a New Testament. Still holding on to Buddhism, he read the New Testament and Pilgrim's Progress. Then he began to pray to God and one night he was awakened with a sense of the certainty of salvation through Christ. Then he realized that in all his years of seeking and following after Buddha he was like a man trying to climb a precipice by a rotten rope. Following his acceptance of Christ as a personal Saviour, he gave up everything else in the joy of salvation and the longing to tell others of it. He was so zealous that he even accosted people on the streets and told them of the Saviour. He gave up his business and went to preaching and is to-day acknowledged to be the foremost Korean pastor and is loved and honored by the Christian Church throughout Korea. Condensed from a chapter in *Korea for Christ,* by *G. T. B. Davis.*

II A Profitable Bargain

There is only One Pearl of Great Price. Surely here we must understand that Christ himself is the peerless pearl, the one in whom the kingdom of heaven is revealed, in whom is found that fullness for which all men consciously or unconsciously sigh and strive.

It was just here that the Jew stumbled. He felt, and felt truly, that in the lawgivers, psalmists, and prophets of Israel he inherited a splendid string of

shining pearls not lightly to be bartered away. And Christianity did not attempt to depreciate the old Scriptures as spurious; it came publishing the glad tidings of a full and vital salvation. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." It was a question of superseding the many pearls by the one. A dispensation that was made glorious yielded to one of excelling glory. As the morning dispenses with the stars, so in Christ came that fuller knowledge of salvation in which were swallowed up and consummated the ancient lights which ruled the night. The position of the oriental nations toward Christian truth is to-day much the same. India, Persia, Arabia, and China boast their sacred books replete with noble teaching; and the missionary calls upon these gifted people to accept the Christian revelation, not on the plea of the worthlessness of their sacred literature, but because he is privileged to introduce to them One in whom are all the treasures of moral and spiritual wisdom and knowledge. The superlative jewel of light, which includes all that they possess with a far excelling mysterious merit of its own, solicits the acceptance of the oriental world. *W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Bane and the Antidote.*

Do not miss the Best because of the Better. One pursues an intellectual career, and when challenged by the claim of the devout life replies with assurance: "Literature, music, pictures, the stars of heaven, the flowers of earth, the splendor of the sea, are glorious things." We joyfully acquiesce in this judgment: yet science and taste must not deny the vision and delight of the soul in the still higher realms of godliness and holiness. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Bane and the Antidote.*

How Eldad gained the Pearl. To the station at the mouth of the Euphrates had come Eldad ben Jacob, the gem merchant, to purchase a wonderful yellow pearl for which he would freely give all his wealth. He learned that it had been sold to Prince Hadanyeh of Calcutta. Months later, weary and travel sore, Eldad salaamed before the Prince. The yellow pearl? Alas, he had it not. Robbers had seized it as it was being taken over the Suleiman mountains—three thousand miles back upon the road over which the gem merchant had come. Three more weary months and Eldad, disguised as a beggar, struck in among the hill-tribes that bordered the great plain. Years slipped by in the search, but at last he traced the pearl into the hands of a half-wild Bactrian chief far to the North, only to learn on finding him that the pearl had been sold to the King of Parthia.

And so Eldad followed up one clue after another, till at last, an old man, he gave up his quest. As he sat by the seaside and loosed an end of his girdle and there ran out into his hand a stream of goodly pearls of many sizes, rare and wonderful, which he had saved for the purchase price of the great golden pearl, another old man suddenly stood by him. "Oh, sir!" exclaimed the old man, "you are rich and I am poor. My son is condemned to die, or pay a very large price, and I have no money. Your hand is full of pearls. My son is my pearl." He who had failed to gain the golden pearl for himself, might at least buy it for another. Impulsively Eldad emptied a handful of pearls into the old man's shriveled palm. "I know not, stranger and benefactor, what God you serve," said the old man, his eyes welling full in gratitude, "but may he give you a better pearl than ever you have dreamed on." Eldad mused long over the joy in the old man's face; the thought of it made him happy, as he took his way back to Antioch and thence to Jerusalem. Wherever, as he journeyed southward, he found want, he relieved it, and with such prodigal hand that one day to a woman on the way not far from Ptolemais he tossed his last pearl. And having asked her more from force of habit than anything else, about the great heart-shaped pearl, she told him that it was owned by a young prophet of Galilee, Jesus by name. It was not for sale. He was offering to give it away, to whoever could rightly discern its beauty.

Staff in hand Eldad set off wearily on the road to Capernaum, yet his heart was as light as his purse, for at least he should see the great pearl before his eyes were closed in death. He reached the place where Jesus was speaking, within the crowded court of a large private house. The voice of the Prophet thrilled Eldad. He spoke of a kingdom—of a kingdom where all is peace and love; where the rich are kind to the poor; where the strong are helpful to the

weak; and all are good to God; where love, unselfish love, is the atmosphere they breathe.

Then Jesus turned and spoke to Eldad. "Wayfarer! What wouldest thou?" Eldad had come to have a strange, all-powerful faith in this Prophet. He believed he could ask anything he would and it would be given him. Should he ask him wealth? No. He would rather the man had his son, and the poor their bread. The yellow pearl? Not that either, for this vision had come to him as a finer sheen than any pearl. And he answered: "Nothing, Lord, save to be with thee in thy kingdom." And Jesus spoke to him joyously: "Blessed art thou who hast come to the light. Thou hast rightly answered. Having chosen first the kingdom, all other things shall be added unto thee. Because thou hast seen, thou shalt see, and seeing thou shalt see forever." Condensed from *The Quest of the Yellow Pearl,* by *N. C. Macfarlane.*

III Missionary Topic Willing to pay the Price

Willing to pay the Price for the Sake of the Pearl. While I was living at Amp'ing in 1893 (writes Mrs. Cecil-Smith of the China Inland Mission), I became acquainted with a native doctor and drugseller named Tsen. From the first time he heard the gospel he was deeply interested in it, and at once began to close his shop on the Lord's Day. Every morning and evening he joined the Christians in worship, for he thought it too long to wait till the next "worship day" came around. Finally I put the test to him: "If you really believe in Jesus as your Saviour you should take your picture image of the goddess of mercy down from your shop and burn it." I knew that such a decided stand for Christ would at once call forth bitter persecutions. I can never forget his answer. "I have been seeking a Saviour for forty years and now that I have found One do you think that I cannot suffer for him?" (I have since found out that his words were quite true, he had been going about from temple to temple to heap up merit for the next life, in his blind, groping way he had been seeking a Saviour for forty years.) He went home and at once took down the paper idol and burned it. Heavy and subtle persecutions immediately broke out against him and for a time he lost all peace and quietness in this world, yet the God of Peace reigned in his heart through it all and kept him steadfast.

Willing to pay the Price for the Sake of Others. A few years ago a minister came from India and appealed to the students in an English university to go back with him and labor with the people in India. "You will have a good time there," he assured them, "a decent house with a veranda, and servants to wait upon you." Not a man volunteered. A few months later a man came from the Congo and asked those same students for volunteers to take up the work of a brave missionary who had given up his life in the cause. "It will most likely mean death to you," he warned them, but there were six students who volunteered for the dead missionary's place.

SENTENCE SERMONS

You may not be looking for the wealth, but Christ is looking for his lost coin. *Dr. Maclaren.*

Anything which makes religion its second object, makes religion no object. *Ruskin.*

Errors like straws upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls must dive below. *Dryden.*

Do you expect that religion is so cheap that without giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You cannot; this pearl is worth everything. *Andrew Murray.*

Old things but tools should be
To compass life's supreme intent. *Henrietta R. Eliot.*

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14.17.

What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Mk. 8.36.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Some one has said that entrance into the kingdom of heaven is looked upon by many as entrance into a fortified town is viewed by the rural population; it may be necessary in time of danger, but they think with longing of the fields and homesteads they must abandon, and it is with constraint, not from love, that they make the change. Rather is membership in the kingdom of such supreme importance that one should willingly sacrifice everything for its sake.

There is a hidden treasure, a pearl of great price, a supreme object desired, in each one's life. With one it is money, with another pleasure, with another power, with another fame, with another God. What is it with you?

Have you the merchant's eagerness to seek and find the pearl of great price? At whatever cost of surrender of your own will enthrone Christ in your hearts and thus make the supreme treasure yours.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

A man found a treasure hidden in a field, and after re-hiding it joyfully sold all that he possessed in order to purchase the field. A merchant in search of pearls found one pearl of great price and sold all that he had that he might buy it. Like that treasure finder and pearl merchant must be the one who would have the treasure or the pearl of great price, the kingdom of heaven.

A net was cast into the sea, and when it was opened on the beach the good fish caught therein were saved, but the bad and useless fish were thrown away. So shall it be with the good and the wicked: at the judgment they will be separated by the angels, and terrible will be the punishment of the wicked.

"Have you understood all that I have been saying?" Jesus questioned his disciples after speaking these parables, and they answered, "Yes." "Every teacher who has learned about the kingdom of heaven (even as you have learned from me) is like a householder who treasures and uses things new and old," then said Jesus, and having finished his parables he departed for another place.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The continuity of old and new, and the insufficiency of either alone.
2. The value of scholarship in Christian teaching.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Describe the Sea of Galilee. (Clipping, page 297.) 2. What caused sudden tempests on so small a lake? (Clipping, page 297.) 3. What is said about fear in the Shepherd Psalm? (Ps. 23.4.) 4. Where was the country of the Gerasenes? (Clipping, page 297.) 5. What information in regard to the demoniac does Mark give which Matthew omits? 6. Look up all the references to demons or unclean spirits, which we have had in earlier lessons, and be prepared to give all the particulars about them. 7. When was Paul driven from a city because his teaching interfered with the profits of some of the people? (Acts 19.23-20.1.)

Questions to think about. 1. What two lessons did Jesus teach by stilling the storm? 2. What verses of the Sermon on the Mount teach one of these lessons? (Mt. 6.25-34.) 3. Why was not the Gerasene demoniac put in an insane asylum? (Clipping, page 296.) 4. Priests in the Roman Catholic Church of to-day are ordained to be "exorcists": what does that mean? 5. What had the Pharisees said about Jesus' power to cure the demon-possessed and what had Jesus answered? (Lesson I, Third Quarter.) 6. What suggested to the demoniac the name of "Legion"? (Clipping, page 297.) 7. How can you explain the immediate effect of Jesus' words upon the demoniac? (Clipping, page 301.) 8. Why did the people want Jesus to leave their country? 9. What thought is there for you in Jesus' counsel to the Gerasene after he had cured him? 10. Who now are demon-possessed? (The sin-possessed.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

LESSON VI—AUGUST 11

A TROUBLED SEA AND A TROUBLED SOUL

Time A.D. 28

Golden Text Place Eastern Shore of Sea of Galilee

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas. Ps. 46.1, 2

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 4.35-41. A Troubled Sea. **T.** Mark 5.1-20. A Troubled Soul. **W.** Ps. 124. Deliverance from Trouble. **T.** Psalm 3. Morning Prayer. **F.** Psalm 4. Evening Prayer. **S.** Psalm 23. God's Shepherding Care. **S.** Isa. 41.8-16. Help in Time of Distress. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 4.35-5.20 READ Mt. 8.28-34 COMMIT vv 38, 39

35 And on that day, when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. 36 And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat. And other boats were with him. 37 And there ariseth a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. 38 And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion: and they awake him, and say unto him, Teacher, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

1 And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. 2 And when he was come out of the boat, straightway there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 who had his dwelling in the tombs; and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain; 4 because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: and no man had strength to tame him. 5 And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him; 7 and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, torment me not. 8 For he said unto him, Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man. 9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he saith unto him, My name is Legion; for we are many. 10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. 11 Now there was there on the mountain side a great herd of swine feeding. 12 And they besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. 13 And he gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea, *in number* about two thousand; and they were drowned in the sea. 14 And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they came to see what it was that had come to pass. 15 And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with demons sitting, clothed and in his right mind, *even* him that had the legion: and they were afraid. 16 And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with demons, and concerning the swine. 17 And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders. 18 And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons besought him that he might be with him. 19 And he suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and *how* he had mercy on thee. 20 And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men marvelled.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

35-41. *On that day.* On which Jesus spoke many parables, verses 33-34.—*The other side.* Of the Sea of Galilee.—*They take him with them, even as he was, in the boat.* These words, together with the information that during the storm Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion, lead one to infer that after his most strenuous day he was physically exhausted, and left Capernaum without preparation that he might escape the crowds and secure a little rest.—*A great storm of wind.* See the Geographical Background.—*Rebuked the wind and said unto the sea.* Thus claiming that nature was subject to his will. "The true view to take of the apostrophe to the storm is to conceive of it, not as spoken, with express intent to influence either the winds or the disciples, still less as addressed to Satan, the prince of the power of the air, but as the spontaneous expression of victorious faith and heroic self-possession. Jesus spake and the storm ceased. What was the connection between the word and the event? Was it a happy coincidence, or a proof of the sagacity of Jesus in foreseeing that the tempest would soon be past, or was it a miracle wrought either by Divine Providence or by Christ's will? There can be no doubt, according to the narratives, "The wind and the sea obey him" (*A. B. Bruce*).—*Why are ye fearful?* "When the Master had said, 'Let us go over unto the other side,' the disciples might have known that to the other side they would come if they had to foot it at the bottom of the sea" (*John McNeill*).—*Have ye not yet faith?* Not yet, after having seen my power exercised so many times?—*Be still.* The Greek word for this means literally *be muzzled;* the sea is personified, spoken to as though a raging animal.—*They.* Those in the boats.

1-20. *Gerasenes.* See page 297.—*Out of the tombs.* See page 296.—*With an unclean spirit.* See page 300.—*Worshipped.* The Greek word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature or to the Creator, RVm.—*Thou Son of the Most High God.* See page 105.—*Adjure.* Charge, or earnestly entreat.—*For he said unto them.* "The devils seem to accuse Jesus of injustice in expelling them: the world often complains that religion exacts more of man than is reasonable and just" (*Luther*).—*Legion.* See page 297.—*He gave them leave.* See page 301.—*To depart from their borders.* They cared less for the recovery of the man than for the loss of their herd, and they feared further loss if Jesus remained.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

41. *And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*

The storm is chang'd into a calm
  At his command and will;
So that the waves, which rag'd before,
  Now quiet are and still. ...
Oh, that men to the Lord would give
  Praise for his goodness then,
And for his works of wonder done
  Unto the sons of men!

And they never praised him a bit. Why did they not praise him? Why did not they gather round about his feet, and praise his name for such marvellous deliverance? I think it was the Godhead in Jesus that blazed out too near for the comfort of the flesh. You know we think we know him—but do we? They thought they knew him by this time. They had been a good deal with him; they walked with him, talked with him, ate and drank with him, they were his intimates and followers, they knew him better than anyone else; and, maybe, they were beginning to think they knew him through and through, when suddenly that wild night, or morning rather, by working a miracle like that, the Godhead blazed out in that tired-looking, lowly, lonely Jesus, and by working a miracle like that he towered away up above them into Godhead and infinity and eternity; and as he towered they cowered, and blanched to the lips. Who is this? It was the Godhead blazing out too near. And they for-

got to say Hallelujah, and they grew white to the lips. *John McNeill,* in *Christ on the Sea.*

Men are troubled still that the wind and the sea should obey him. His influence, which ought to have ended long ago, is not yet even on the wane. These miracles of the Gospels that take so much explaining, this persistent spiritual influence that connects itself with a risen, reigning Redeemer, they compel men still to ask, "Who, then, is this?" *Expository Times.*

5.3. *Who had his dwelling in the tombs.* About five miles from Beyrout there is a group of red-roofed buildings known as "The Asfuriyeh," the Lebanon Hospital for the Insane, the only one in Syria to-day where the mentally diseased are scientifically treated. Patients are brought here from all over Syria and there are more applications than can be accommodated. One incurable patient from Jerusalem had been in a monastery that professes to exorcise demons where she was starved, beaten and chained for two years. Then her husband took her away and left her chained up by the neck in a room alone, with some bread on the floor near by. Her plight was discovered and she was brought to the Asfuriyeh by an English lady. Another case is that of a young girl brought from Jaffa by a missionary, who learned that at the advice of an aged Sheik her mother was going to leave her in the bottom of a well for many days. In three months her mental trouble was cured.

5.9. *What is thy name?* He does not begin by preaching any gospel, he simply asks the man his name. And we may well believe that the maniac's manner would be instantly transformed. Here was a voice which sounded as perhaps no human voice before or since has sounded—the quiet, gentle, affectionate tone must have gone home with healing to the recesses of that shattered mind; and here were the words of One who spoke to him as a man speaks to his friend. Other men had repeatedly come to bind him with their cruel chains; who could this be who came with no chain, but who bound him all the more firmly by the gentle bonds of love? *John Edgar McFadyen,* in *The City with Foundations.*

17. *And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders.* The law of gravitation would not now be accepted if it interfered with vested interests. *Macaulay.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

4.38. *He was in the stern, asleep.* It is said that in the flourishing epoch of Galilee, under the Roman rule, there were four hundred vessels on the lake, where now there are scarcely a dozen.

The modern boats are all of the same type, doubtless built on the model of those used by the apostolic fishermen of Galilee. They are broad, with a very shallow keel, are decked at the bow and stern, which are high; have an open well in the center, where a mast can be stepped; and are capable of accommodating from a dozen to twenty men. Under the deck of the bows is a sort of open cabin, where there is room for several men to lie down, and where our Lord was asleep safe from the waves breaking over the prow during the storm. When needful, the boats are propelled by oars; but whenever the wind favors, the mast is raised, and the large lateen sail similar to those in use on the Mediterranean, is hoisted. *H. B. Tristram, Eastern Customs.*

5.2. *A man with an unclean spirit.* Belief in demons was widespread in the ancient world. The earth was supposed to be full of demons who were seeking a habitation in human beings. It is interesting to recall here the fact that in the Moslem world one who has an inclination to gape closes his mouth quickly, for gaping is considered the work of the devil who would thus enter and take possession of one. The Hindus are said to have the same belief, and they twirl their fingers before their mouths when gaping so as to prevent a devil from getting in.

5.3. *Who had his dwelling in the tombs and no man could any more bind him.* Hospitals and asylums belong to modern times. Palestine, like all the countries at this time, had no homes for the poor and the afflicted. The means used to restrain this man from harming himself and others, binding him with fetters and chains, had proved ineffectual, he had managed to free himself and to escape to the tombs. These tombs were caves, either natural or hewn out of

the rock, which were used as burial places for the dead. They were always outside the cities, usually in lonely regions, and because they contained the bones of the dead they were regarded as unclean. Maniacs haunt such caves to-day.

6. *He ran and worshipped him.* In a village in South China there lives a native Christian named Intercalary Month, now an old man, whose life in his youth was saved by a mad woman's falling at his feet and worshipping him. This mad woman had run through the streets of the village proclaiming that a goddess demanded sacrifices for the dead, and a general feast for all the people. The villagers believed her word and started to raise the money for the celebration. The Christians refused to join them, and this so enraged the heathen people that they seized Intercalary Month and drove him out of the village, swearing that they would kill him if he ever returned. As he passed out of the village gate he met the mad woman who had caused all the trouble: one word from her and his instant death would follow. But the woman fell at his feet, worshipping him, and the mob, angered and surprised, turned upon her and forced her to flee for her life. The festivities were not carried out, and Intercalary Month was allowed to return to his home.

9. *My name is Legion.* Only by an image drawn from reminiscences of his former life can he express his sense of his own condition; he had seen the serried ranks of the Roman legion, that fearful instrument of conquest, that sign of terror and fear to the conquered nations, and before which the Jews more especially quailed. Even such, at once one and many, cruel and inexorable and strong, were the powers that were tyrannizing over him. *Trench.*

11. *A great herd of swine.* Although the Law forbade the eating of swine's flesh, there was no law against the raising of swine. There were many Romans dwelling in the Decapolis, east of the Jordan, and for them the swine were doubtless destined.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Our last five lessons have been about the events that took place and the parables that were spoken all upon one busy day in Capernaum, in the house where Jesus made his home and along the shore of the lake. On the evening of that day, Jesus started with his disciples to cross over to the eastern shore of the lake; and there arose the storm which forms the subject of the first part of to-day's lesson. That storm taught the disciples their dependence upon a Master of marvelous power, and showed them their own lack of faith. It played an important part in the training of the twelve.

Dr. Tristram in "The Land of Israel" describes his first view of this famous lake. One ride after another had been surmounted, when on a sudden the calm blue basin, slumbering in placid sweetness beneath its surrounding wall of hills, burst upon us, and we were looking down on the hallowed scenes of our Lord's ministry. We were on the brow of a very steep hill. Below us was a narrow plain, sloping to the sea, the beach of which we could trace to its northern extremity. Along that fringe, could we have known where to find them, lay the remains of Chorazim, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Opposite to us were the heights of the country of the Gadarenes, and the scene of the feeding of the five thousand. On some one of the slopes beneath us the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. All looked small for the theater of such great events. There was a calm peacefulness in the look of these shores on the west, with the paths by the water's edge, which made them the fitting theater for the delivery of the message of peace and reconciliation.

Though the lake is usually calm, it is subject to sudden and fierce tempests despite the fact that it is only eight miles wide by thirteen miles long. It is six hundred feet below the Mediterranean, while the great eastern plateaus rise to a height of two to four thousand feet above the sea; and drawn down through the gorges cut by the water courses as through funnels, or blowing from the South through the narrow Jordan Valley, the wind beats with fury upon the lake.

Gerasa, "the country of the Gerasenes," has been identified with the ruins of Kersa or Gersa, near which are ancient tombs and a "steep place" down which the swine rushed into the sea.

Assign paragraphs 71, 169, 88-94, "In the Master's Country."

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

These two narratives are full of interest for your class. Tell them both vividly, making your pupils see in the first the great power of Jesus, in the second his great sympathy. Show Tissot's "Jesus calming the storm," No. 31, or Doré's "Stilling the Tempest," Wilde No. 78; describe the clouds overhead, the boisterous winds, the wild waters, the frightened disciples, the calmly sleeping Lord: then in the midst of the distress the disciples awaken Jesus,—he lifts his head from his cushion and looking quietly around arises and with a gesture and a word all is changed, there is a great calm. A missionary and her little five year old girl were the only passengers one night on a boat when a sudden storm came up. The boatmen gave up all hope of being saved, and the frightened mother threw herself down beside her child and cried, "O my darling, we are lost! We are going to drown in the sea!" The little girl so suddenly aroused from her sleep did not understand what her mother meant, but she remembered a song that she had learned about the sea, and she began to sing it—

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea.

The words calmed her mother, and she joined in singing the hymn through. The storm ceased as suddenly as it had arisen, and the ignorant sailors said it was because of the words of the "Jesus People," as they called the missionary and her little girl, and they wanted to know more about such a Pilot. In the storm on the Sea of Galilee Jesus did what no one else could do, stilled it by his word.

In the second story do not describe the demon, nor his life, only briefly mentioning the fact that he was bound with chains and lived in the tombs. Dwell upon Jesus' sympathy for him, and recall earlier lessons where Jesus went about doing good.

Give each pupil a copy of the poem on page 306 to learn for next Sunday.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When Captain John Smith lived in Virginia he found that the Indians were in the habit of drying their tobacco and crushing it into powder that they might sprinkle it upon the water when a storm was raging. You remember how Xerxes, the King Ahasuerus whom Queen Esther besought for her people (one of our lessons last year), ordered the waves of the sea lashed with whips, because a storm had arisen and had destroyed the bridges over which his army was to march. These efforts to control the waves of the sea seem very silly to us, for we know that man has no power over them. But there is a record in the Gospels of a time when Jesus, the Son of God, by a word calmed the waves of the Sea of Galilee. Where were he and his disciples going? Why? At what time? When the storm arose why were the disciples frightened? Where was Jesus? Why was he there? What did he say to the wind and the sea? What was the result?

For Older Pupils. Have you ever thought of Jesus as wearied, exhausted, "tired to death" as we are wont to say? The temptation typified by the desire in the Wilderness to change stones into bread for himself Jesus resolutely put away once for all, and throughout his life never availed himself of a power that was not humanity's also, living as we live, becoming just as worn and spent and weary as we often do. As we find comfort in the thought that Jesus knew what it means to be severely tempted, so we may find it in the knowledge that he knew what it means to be utterly wearied. "On that day, when even was come"; with these words our lesson begins. What had Jesus done that day to make him physically exhausted, so that it was necessary for him to go, "even as he was," away from the multitude? (Historical Background.)

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I On Life's Sea

St. Augustine's Parable. The lesson for us in the story of the calming of the Sea of Galilee is contained in these words of St. Augustine, spoken so long

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"PEACE, BE STILL"
(Christ Stilling the Waves)

ago. We are sailing, he said, in this life as through a sea, and the wind rises, and storms of temptation are not wanting. Whence is this, save because Jesus is sleeping in thee, *i. e.* thy faith in Jesus is slumbering in thy heart? Rouse him and say, Master, we perish. He will awaken, *i. e.* thy faith will return to thee, and the danger will be over.

When the Storms come. "And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." The beauty of the story is in the way in which all comes from and belongs to Jesus. When he rises the storm stops. The calm that comes is from the power of his presence. As a strong, quiet man steps in majestically among a crowd of noisy brawlers, and his very appearance makes them ashamed and hushes their noise, so Jesus steps in among the elements, and they are still in a moment. It is a picture of the peace he bestows. However feebly we understand it, the story at least is luminous to every loving eye with this—the majesty and beauty of Christ and the way in which peace flows out abundantly wherever he is truly present. A thousand saints have felt that. These stories of Jesus are so full of his spirit that they scatter it everywhere, and the calm that fell upon the waters of Gennesaret has been renewed in the peacefulness and rest that have fallen upon multitudes of hearts that have read or listened to the narrative. *Bishop Phillips Brooks,* in *New Starts in Life.*

With Christ at Sea. There are those who want Christ on board; it is pleasant to have a service on Sunday, to be reminded of heavenly things after the work of the week. They want him on deck when it comes to manipulating the last harbor; but they wish him to travel as a passenger and keep his cabin most of the time. They do not wish him to look about the ship, or ask questions of the cargo. And it will not do. Christ is not going to be accommodated with a cabin in our lives, and keep it. We cannot hope any longer that he will go to sleep on a pillow in the stern, and only wake when we are in danger. The weariness of mortality is no longer upon him: "He watching over Israel slumbers not nor sleeps."

But we can take a higher figure. When Christ comes on board he comes as captain. He takes command; he rules the ship. His are the sailing orders; he directs the course, and we must go where he wills. There is only one place for him, and that is the captain's bridge. Many of us love our independence; we talk about our rights; we like to be masters of ourselves. Nevertheless the ultimate word of life is not freedom, but obedience. Every man has his master. We obey something: if it be not Christ, it will be some lesser and less worthy lord. The beginning of wise life lies in recognizing as we embark that we are going, not only with Christ, but under Christ. *W. Charter Piggott,* in *Sunday-School Chronicle.*

A Great Experience. It is a great experience to be in a mighty storm at sea, when we have full confidence in the captain and the vessel. As the ship goes ploughing resistlessly along through the dark night driven by its heart of fire, and one hears the lookout crying, "All's well", the soul,

> "Into the consciousness of safety thrilled,
> Swells vast to heaven,"

and claims kindred with and triumphs over the forces of the storm. A similar but greater experience is it when a storm comes down upon life's sea, and rayless darkness sets in, to know that the Great Captain is on board and to hear his voice across the storm proclaiming that all is well. Then and only then do we know the full meaning of that word, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." *Borden Parker Bowne,* in *The Essence of Religion.*

The Christian and his Chart. Since 1883 I have been consciously trying to sail on the ocean of life so as to keep ever heading towards that haven, which something within assures me exists beyond the bound of time and space. God knows it has not been all calm seas and sunny skies on the voyage, there have been head-winds and fogs and ice. Yes, there have been also shoals and reefs and storms. All have had their share in forming the devious wake the years have left behind me. Think what the chart of life has meant, still means, must ever mean to me. It seems to me it must mean just the same to any man faring forth on the same venture. Its inconceivable value will only fade when I have

crossed the last bar and met my Pilot face to face. *Wilfred T. Grenfell,* in *A Man's Helpers.*

II DEMON-POSSESSED

A Study of Demon-Possession in the Time of Jesus. In Lesson IX, First Quarter, in Mark's account of Jesus' first teaching in Capernaum, we hear of his curing "a man with an unclean spirit," who had at once recognized Jesus as "the Holy One of God." When Jesus bade the unclean spirit come out of the man, the spirit obeyed, "tearing him and crying out with a loud voice." The effect upon the bystanders was great: "What is this? a new teaching?" they questioned; "with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him," they exclaimed. In the next lesson we were told that he cast out many demons and suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him. And they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic and palsied, and he healed them.

Again in the second quarter, third lesson, we heard about demon-possession. The unclean spirits, we read, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, "Thou art the Son of God." And he charged them much that they should not make him known. And when he sent forth the disciples to preach he gave them "authority to cast out demons."

In the first lesson of this quarter we learned that the scribes accused Jesus of casting out demons by the prince of demons. Our lesson to-day contains the famous account of the demons and the swine. And there are several other cases of demon-possession mentioned in the Gospels, notably that of the epileptic boy at the Mount of Transfiguration (Lesson IX, Fourth Quarter), the blind and dumb demoniacs reported by Matthew, and of the daughter of the Syrophœnician woman (Lesson III, Fourth Quarter).

How shall we understand demon-possession? Dr. A. B. Bruce has an exhaustive discussion of the question in "The Miraculous Element in the Gospels," and from that work I quote the following observations.

Whatever more ailed the demoniac, this at least is certain to begin with, that he was afflicted with real disease of the brain and nervous system, sometimes to a distressing extent. This is the sure datum from which we must start in all our attempts at diagnosis of this most mysterious and perplexing malady.

The question then arises, was the possession an additional symptom, or was it merely an inference from the other symptoms and their supposed cause?

To pronounce dogmatically that possession is impossible would, indeed, be presumptuous; for we know too little about the world of spirit, and the connection of spirit with matter, to be able to say what is possible. That there should be one spirit or soul virtually united to a bodily organism, and acting on it through the brain and nervous system, is the great mystery. To the Materialist it appears a mystery too great for credence; and probably no one who believes in a separate essence called a soul, the substratum of the phenomena of thought and feeling, would be inclined to pronounce it impossible that a second soul might occupy and use or abuse the same corporeal organisation, oppressing the legitimate tenant, interrupting normal functions, and producing a variety of morbid actions.

On the other hand, there is no difficulty in conceiving of the insane man in the synagogue of Capernaum, or the madman of Gadara, thinking of himself as possessed by an evil spirit, and speaking as its mouthpiece, when a universal belief in the reality of such possession prevailed. This belief, shared by the sufferer before disease overtook him, might readily assume the morbid form of a fixed idea that he himself was so possessed, and become one of the most outstanding marks of mental aberration. Analogous facts are presented in confessions made by reputed witches on trial, of compacts between them and Satan.

Jesus certainly reformed the practice of exorcism, for he cast out demons by a word, without the aid of spells; insomuch that the people marvelled at the contrast between his way of working and that common among exorcists, and said: "What new doctrine is this, for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." In a similar manner we should expect to find him purifying the conception of possession; and in point of fact he did this in his apologetic discourse on the cure of demoniacs, by placing pos-

session under a universal and ethical point of view, representing it as a manifestation of the power of Satan, the great antagonist of the kingdom of God.

Jesus' Cure of the Demoniac. A few people recognize spiritual values; most of us in our little practical blindness do not very much perceive or understand them; and many deny them altogether. This incident is a most impressive exemplification of the supreme faith of Jesus in the efficacy of spiritual forces to meet all human needs. He faces human abnormality at its worst and believes that God is willing and able to cure it; he believes that he himself has the spiritual power to be the Agent of the cure; and he believes in the man as capable of cure. Doubtless the calm approach of that strong, pure Man, perhaps the only One whose eyes had never shown fear of the maniac, stopped him in his headlong course and silenced his loud cries. Then Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. He appeals to the man, asks him his name, humors him in the idea that the demons may go into the swine, and with his authoritative "begone" compels the man to realize that he is freed. Whatever evil the man had, he need not have. So Jesus believed, so he made the man believe. It was the spiritual appeal to his manhood, and the man in the maniac responded. *Theodore Gerald Soares,* in *Biblical World.*

The One Unquestionable Thing. Jesus teaches that there is a force, an influence, a spirit in the world which is altogether evil, and which is continually devising, seeking, and working sin. It is the unclean spirit rejoicing in the defilement of the house which it inhabits. It is the father of lies ready to beget falsehood in every listening mind. It is the enemy of souls sowing tares in the field every night. It is Satan longing to get possession of the soul that he may sift it as wheat.

Whether we take this teaching of Jesus literally or not, whether we believe that evil is embodied in demoniac personality or not, one thing is unquestionable. Jesus regarded evil as a positive, organic, ever active, malignant power, a prince of this world, whose domain lies all around us on every side, the friend of sin and the foe of the soul. There is a conflict going on in the world. It is not a mere game. It is an elemental warfare between right and wrong. We are cast into the midst of this conflict. An unseen, mighty, skilful, relentless adversary is against us. And in every heart there is a traitor ready to betray the citadel into his hands. *Henry van Dyke.*

How to cure the Inner Tumult. Dr. Jowett was speaking with a Salvation Army officer and hearing from him something about his dark unchristian days. "I had a terrible temper," he said. "In a minute it would change me into a devil." "I suppose you have conquered it now?" Dr. Jowett asked. "Oh, no," he replied, "Christ has conquered it for me."

Men try sometimes to calm the tumult of the inner life for themselves, or for one another, by merely making the outward circumstances calm and peaceful, but it does no good, wisely observes Bishop Phillips Brooks. It is only dressing the maniac in a Quaker's clothes. They may hush and awe him for a moment with their serene composure, but after the moment's hush is over he will be as wild as ever, and tear his uncongenial dress to tatters. Jesus Christ still frees the soul from the demon of evil.

III A Missionary to his Own House

The Story told in Jerry McAuley's Words. It was in the Water Street Mission that Jerry McAuley gave this version of the last three verses of our lesson:

Did you ever read in the Bible about that fellow in the tombs? He tore all his clothes off and broke his chains and nobody could help him. But Jesus came along and saved him, and put a new suit of clothes on him, shoes and all, —no second-hand things. But what did the fellow do? Why, I expect he straightened up his coat collar and put on a white choker and said: "Well, Lord, I guess I'll go along with you and have an easy time and folks will think I'm respectable!" But Jesus said to him: "Go back among the people that knew what a miserable tramp you were, and tell them what wonderful things God has done for you." And I can imagine that I see him go back and get up on an old barrel and tell the people what a miserable wretch he was until Christ found him.

Where Every One is sent. I do not know whether I am expressing your feelings or not, but I feel it is easier to go as a missionary to the heathen than it is to be a missionary to one's own home! It is far easier to preach from the pulpit to a crowd, or to speak to a class in the Sunday School, than it is to speak a loving word to brother or sister, father or mother, son or daughter in the home. Yet it is in the home Christ would have us begin work for him. That is exactly what Andrew did without being ordered—he became a missionary to his own home. "He findeth first his own brother Simon. And he brought him to Jesus." That is what Christ wants us all to be. And whither will he send us? Where he sent the Gadarene of old—to our own homes. And what a fine field of labor the home affords! Father and mother, have you no son or daughter who has not yet found Christ? Will you not tell such what great things the Lord hath done for your souls? Young men and women, have you no brothers or sisters who are still strangers to Christ? Will you not speak to them and tell them all he has been to you, and how he had compassion upon you? The home, the home—there is no finer field for missionary service. Condensed from *The Glorious Company of the Apostles,* by *J. D. Jones.*

Witnessing in the Home. A great life insurance company in New York had invited all its agents throughout the country to a business conference in New York, and while in attendance one of the agents from the West insured the barber, the elevator man, and a waiter in the restaurant, all of whom had been employed for years by the insurance company in its great building. No one had thought to offer policies to these men in the home office building. Are there not many like that great insurance company? Are there not members of our own household or of our own circle of friends, of our own Sunday School or day school class, who may rightly expect us to have a personal interest in their spiritual life?

It is not only by telling others what great things the Lord has done for us that we witness for him. More often it is by the silent witness of our daily lives that others are convinced of the power of Christ. And usually it is more difficult to be Christlike in the home than it is outside the home. In the home comes friction, a thousand and one little things arise that try one's Christian spirit more than do the greater annoyances and troubles from friends and foes beyond the home. "Lord, make me easy to live with" is a prayer that every one should pray. A number of friends yesterday were speaking in highest praise of the beautiful character of a woman devoted to public philanthropic works, when her husband added the highest praise of all, "All that you have said of her is true," he quietly remarked, "but what she is to you and your boards and in all her charities, that and far more than that she is in her home life."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Fear can give no reasonable account of itself, if Christ is in the boat. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

With God go over the sea—without him, not over the threshold. *Russian Proverb.*

What time I am afraid,
I will put my trust in thee. Ps. 56.3.

No religious calm is safe in which the personal Christ sleeps and we think that we can do without him. *Bishop Phillips Brooks.*

O Friend, never strike sail to a fear! Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. *Emerson.*

Thy hand, thy hand, great Guide, thy hand
To steer my lonely little barque
Around the rocks where breakers beat
Themselves to fury and to foam—
O, Master of all storms and seas,
Till to my harbor home I come,
My Pilot Lord, thy hand, thy hand. *Charles Coke Woods.*

Tarry not to exorcise the devil but hasten to exercise the angel. *Gore.*

"The light that shines farthest shines brightest at home."

Home missions are as necessary as foreign missions, and the domestic commission often calls for the very highest qualities of service. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

Show the new life where the old one was lived: it will cost, but it will count. *Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

The boat had been tossing about for some time before the disciples aroused Jesus. They thought they could manage it alone, without him. What if they had not seen their mistake in time? Are we trying to manage our life boats ourselves, trying to get along without the guiding hand and power of Jesus Christ? What if we fail to realize our mistake?

"Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea!
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass come from thee!
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me."

Have ye not yet faith? Jesus asked the disciples who had been with him and seen his mighty works. How much more keen the edge of that question is when addressed to us, a thoughtful writer exclaims; to us who know him so much better, and have centuries of his working for his servants to look back upon!

The lesson for us in the account of the demoniac is that we must be complete masters of ourselves, must allow no demon of sin to enter in and take away our self-dominion and our self-respect.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The problem of human abnormality: what to do with the insane, the unbalanced, the weak, the ignorant, the incompetent, the vicious. Are we willing to pay the cost of cure and reform? A New York physician advocates the prevention of crime by the treatment and education of mentally defective children by the state; the passing of a law that physicians must report all such cases just as they now do all cases of contagious diseases.

2. Where property is preferred to personality, efforts at reform languish. The trades and the schemes that beseech Jesus to go away and leave them in peace.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What were the duties of a ruler of the synagogue? (Clipping, page 304.) 2. Why were there so many in the house making a tumult? (Clipping, page 305.) 3. On what other occasion did Jesus say that the dead was only sleeping? (Jn. 11.11, 13.) 4. What is the meaning of *cemetery?* (Dictionary.) 5. At what other times were the three disciples mentioned in verse 37 the only ones whom Jesus allowed with him? (Clipping, page 305.) 6. To what language do the two strange words in our Golden Text belong? (Clipping, page 304.) 7. How many other people did Jesus raise from the dead? (Lk. 7.11-17; Jn. 11.1-46.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why was Jairus willing to fall at Jesus' feet when other Pharisees were scorning Jesus? 2. Name the disciples whom Jesus did not take with him on this occasion. 3. Are there customs sometimes observed in connection with the death of friends to-day which are just as inconsistent or just as hollow as those of Christ's day? 4. What case of the restoration of life did we study last year? (Elisha's restoration of the Shunammite's son.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

LESSON VII—AUGUST 18

THE RULER'S DAUGHTER

Golden Text

And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise. Mark 5.41

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 5.21-24; 35-43. The Ruler's Daughter. **T.** Mark 5.25-34 A Woman's Healing Faith. **W.** Mark 1.35-45. The Touch of Power. **T.** Luke 7.1-10. Jesus' Power over Disease. **F.** Luke 7. 11-17. Jesus' Power over Death. **S.** 1 Kings 17.17-24. Widow's Son Restored to Life. **S.** Luke 5.17-26. Jesus' Power over Disease and Sin. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 5.21-43 READ Mt. 9.18-26; Luke 8.41-56 COMMIT vv 41, 42

21 And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered unto him; and he was by the sea. 22 And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet, 23 and beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: *I pray thee,* that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live. 24 And he went with him; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.

35 While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's *house,* saying, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Teacher any further? 36 But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe. 37 And he suffered no man to follow with him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. 38 And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he beholdeth a tumult, and *many* weeping and wailing greatly. 39 And when he was entered in, he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult, and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth. 40 And they laughed him to scorn. But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and her mother and them that were with him, and goeth in where the child was. 41 And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise, 42 And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement. 43 And he charged them much that no man should know this: and he commanded that *something* should be given her to eat.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21-24. *Unto the other side.* On his return to the western shore of the Lake after having been in the country of the Gadarenes, on the eastern side.—*One of the rulers of the synagogue.* His duty was to select those who took part in the services, and to keep order. See page 314.—*My little daughter.* An only child, Lk. 8.42.—*Made whole.* Or, *saved,* RVm.

35-43. *They come.* Messengers come.—*Not heeding.* Or, *overhearing,* RVm. —*Fear not, only believe.* The sympathy of Jesus goes out to the father who might be staggered by the evil news.—*Why make ye a tumult.* See Light from Oriental Life.—*The child is not dead, but sleepeth.* The people take his words literally, and their scornful laughter, verse 40, shows that they knew the child was really dead. Jesus uses the words figuratively, speaking of her as asleep and knowing that he was about to awaken her. Our word *cemetery* means *sleeping place.*—*Talitha cumi.* The actual Aramaic words, the local dialect akin to Hebrew, which Jesus used.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

37. *Save Peter and James and John.* The Prime Minister of this country has his Cabinet of fifteen or twenty persons with whom from time to time he takes counsel on great affairs of State. But within the Cabinet there is a committee of the Cabinet consisting of four or five of its most influential members, whom the Prime Minister admits to a still more intimate confidence. In exactly the same way there was an inner circle within the circle of the Apostolate, and that inner circle consisted of Peter and James and John. These three men enjoyed a special intimacy with Christ. They stood in closer relationship to him than the rest. They shared his confidences. They were permitted to be near him on some of the great experiences of his life. When he entered Jairus' house to have his first wrestle with death, he suffered no man to follow with him save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. When he ascended the Mount to talk with Moses and Elijah concerning the exodus which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem, he took with him as the sole witnesses of that never-to-be-forgotten scene these same favored three. And when again, on the night of the betrayal, he agonized beneath the crushing load of human sin in the Garden, it was Peter, James and John, he called to be the sharers of his bitter sorrow, as before on the Mount he had called them to behold his glory. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

39. *The child is not dead but sleepeth.*

Out yonder in the moonlight, wherein God's Acre lies,
Go angels walking to and fro, singing their lullabies.
Their radiant wings are folded, and their eyes are bended low,
As they sing among the beds wherein the flowers delight to grow,—

"Sleep, Oh, sleep!
The Shepherd guardeth his sheep.
Fast speedeth the night away,
Soon cometh the glorious day;
Sleep, weary ones, while ye may,
Sleep, oh, sleep!" *Eugene Field.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

22. *He falleth at his feet.* It has always been common in the East for one seeking a favor of another to fall on his knees before that one and even to kiss his garment or his feet.

38. *Many weeping and wailing greatly.* Travelers tell us that it is still the custom in Palestine to hire mourners to bewail the dead. As soon as a death takes place relatives and friends gather round the body and utter their lamentations, and then their place is taken by those hired to keep up the weeping and loud cries. Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, probably a man of wealth, could afford to hire many musicians also. "Two flutes and one mourning woman were necessary at the burial of a wife, even of the poorest man. In Rome the number of flute-players was by the Twelve Tables limited to twelve, a check upon the luxury of woe."

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Matthew gives the raising of Jairus' daughter as an after-incident of the day upon which he gave a great feast to Jesus in connection with his acceptance of his call to be a disciple, lesson XII, First Quarter. Mark, whom we follow here, records it as happening just as Jesus landed at Capernaum after his trip to the country of the Gerasenes. The account of the Master's control over winds and waves and disordered minds is fittingly followed by that of his control over death: he is Lord of life and death.

Assign paragraphs 95-99, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Talk about the seeds and the grasses and the trees that seem dry and dead in winter and yet are only "asleep," for when spring comes they awaken to life

again. Let your class recite this poem written by Edith M. Thomas, which you gave them last Sunday to learn:—

"You think I'm dead,"
The apple tree said,
"Because I have never a leaf to show,
Because I stoop,
And my branches droop,
And the dull, grey mosses over me grow;
But I'm alive in trunk and shoot,
The buds of next May
I fold away
But I pity the withered grass at my root."

"You think I'm dead,"
The quick grass said,
"Because I have parted with stem and blade;
But under the ground
I'm safe and sound,
With the snow's thick blanket over me laid.
I'm all alive and ready to shoot
Should the spring of the year
Come dancing here,
But I pity the flower without branch or root."

"You think I'm dead,"
A soft voice said,
"Because not a branch or root I own.
I never have died,
But close I hide
In a plump seed that the wind has sown;
Patient I wait through the long winter hours.
You will see me again;
I shall laugh at you then,
Out of the eyes of a hundred flowers."

We have a lesson to-day about a young girl who "slept," not as we do every night but as the trees and grasses and seeds do in winter. Picture this happy home, the busy father, the little daughter's sudden illness, the father's haste to meet the Great Physician, his eager cry for help, Christ's loving sympathy and prompt response, the arrival of the messenger from the home with his sad news, Christ's words of comfort to the father, the excitement in the home, the scene where the dead girl lay, Christ's thoughtful care of the maiden after she was restored to life. Show Tissot's picture of the Raising of Jairus' Daughter, No. 34, or Hofmann's, Perry 7970. That little girl must have seen in Christ's wonderful face his sympathy and love, and must have always loved him for what he had done for her. So Christ loves every girl and boy and is ready to help every one who is in trouble.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Gipsy Smith says that if all parts of the Bible were destroyed except the fifth chapter of Mark we could go right on preaching, for in that chapter we have a man's Christ, a woman's Christ, and a child's Christ. We had last week the lesson of the man saved by Christ: who was he? To-day we have the lesson of the child saved by Christ. Who was the child?

For Older Pupils. In his writings Mr. Frederic Myers, who is famous for his psychical researches, recalls a profound impression made upon him when a very young lad. "The first grief that I remember," he says, "came from the sight of a dead mole which had been crushed by a cartwheel. Deeply moved, I hurried back to my mother and asked her whether the little mole had gone to heaven. Gently and lovingly but without doubt, she told me that the little mole had no spirit and would not live again. To this day I remember my

rush of tears at the thought of that furry, innocent creature, crushed by a danger which I fancied it too blind to see, and losing all joy forever by that unmerited stroke. The pity of it, the pity of it, and the first horror of a death without resurrection rose in my bursting heart."

Death without resurrection is a thought intolerable to us all. In after life Mr. Myers tried to prove scientifically that there is life beyond the grave for human beings. It cannot be thus proved, but it has been historically demonstrated in Christ's death and resurrection. Three restorations after life had passed away are recorded in Christ's ministry. What are they?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I I Say Unto Thee, Arise

Jesus' View of Death. When Jesus said to the hired mourners in the home of Jairus: "Why make ye a tumult and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth," they thought he doubted the reality of her death. Not so. Jesus spoke these words in the full knowledge of the miracle he was about to perform, when he would awaken her, but though the figure of speech may have been a common one, these words tell us also his view of death, that death is a sleep, a closing of the eyes to this world to open them again in a better one. We shall all sleep, the good and the evil alike, but we shall not all die; for if any man keep the word of Christ, he shall never see death; he is passed from death unto life; he abideth forever. "When the hour of our departure comes may the good Lord put us into a gentle sleep, and in the awakening may we find ourselves not homeless, but at home, glad to be at home, glad to meet the deathless One, and to see him face to face."

On the monument over the grave of Keats, in the cemetery at Rome, these words of Shelley are engraved.

> Peace, peace, he is not dead, he doth not sleep,
> He hath awakened from the dream of life;
> 'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
> With phantoms an unprofitable strife.

Why is it judged Incredible with you, if God doth raise the Dead? The late Prof. H. G. Seely writes thus: "The two types of true wings are limited to birds and bats; and no living reptile approximates to developing such an organ of flight as a wing. Judged, therefore, by the method of comparing the anatomical structures of one animal with another, which is termed 'comparative anatomy,' the existence of flying reptiles might be pronounced impossible. But in the light which the revelations of geology afford, our convictions become tempered with modesty; and we learn that with nature nothing is impossible, in development of animal structure." And he proceeds to explain how the crocodile and bird have descended from a common ancestor. That the bird is a near relative of the lizard is a commonplace of science; and unless nearly all our great authorities are at fault, the bird is descended, though not from any existing reptile, yet from ancestors that were definitely reptilian. The scale of the reptile corresponds to the feather of the bird; indeed, the most elaborate feather is only a much divided scale. The plume of the ostrich, the wing of the albatross, the tail-feather of the lyre-bird, the train of the peacock, the gorgeous plumage of the bird of paradise, are only the much differentiated, highly wrought, and transfigured scales of the lizard of the primitive slime.

When I hear the scientist declaring that "nothing is impossible in development of animal structure," and that the superb singers of the sky have been evolved from some ancient reptile, I fancy myself listening to a naturalistic priest reading the funeral service: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Only this time it is not the funeral service, but the ode of the resurrection, for the resurrection is past already, and in the bird of paradise the body of glory is already before the celebrant's eyes. We do not set this argument forth as a demonstration of the resurrection of the body; it does, however, entitle us to ask, "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the

dead?" If he can effect these marvelous transformations in the brute world, surely he may conserve and perfect in a manner yet more wonderful the bodily and spiritual life of His elect and redeemed. Condensed from *A Fatal Barter,* by *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

I shall be satisfied when I awake. The spirit, because emancipated from the body, shall spring into greater intensity of action, shall put forth powers that have been held down here, and shall come into contact with an order of things which here it has but indirectly known. To our true selves and to God we shall wake. Here we are like men asleep in some chamber that looks toward the eastern sky. Morning by morning comes the sunrise, with the tender glory of its rosy light and blushing heavens, and the heavy eyes are closed to it all. Here and there some lighter sleeper, with thinner eyelids or face turned to the sun, is half conscious of a vague brightness, and feels the light, though he does not see the colors of the sky nor the forms of the filmy clouds. Such souls are our saints and prophets, but most of us sleep on unconscious. To us all the moment comes when we shall wake, and see for ourselves the bright and terrible world which we have so often forgotten, and so often been tempted to think was itself a dream. See to it that that awakening be for you the beholding of what you have loved, the finding, in the sober certainty of waking bliss, of all the objects which have been your visions of delight in the sleep of earth! *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Similes and Figures.*

I say unto thee, arise.

The heart of the clod is stirring
With impulse blind for room;
The sun's soft voice is wooing it;
The wind's warm breath is suing it—
"Wake, little clod, to beauty;
Stir, tiny seed, to duty;
Rise to life, to bloom."

Thou soul of mine, art groping
Thy heavenward path to prove?
Hark to the great Heart wooing thee,
List to the great Voice suing thee—
"Wake thou, my own, to beauty;
Rise, thou redeemed, to duty;
Rise to life, to love." *Eva Horton.*

II I Pray Thee That She May Live

We do not understand God's Ways. What countless prayers for the life of dear ones have ascended the world over from grief-stricken hearts! Entreaties just as earnest as that of the synagogue ruler have been denied, the life of the daughter or the son, of the father or the mother, has not been spared. Why should one be taken and another left? Why should an old man, weary of life, live on, and a young man of great promise suddenly die? Why should a wretch who is of no use to himself or any one else survive an accident which kills a noble man whose life was one continued blessing to many? We do not know.

"What was the reason for a horror like that?" questioned a young man on reading an account of a terrible disaster as told in a recent paper. "What does Providence mean by permitting such cruelty?"

The uncle addressed did not answer then, but later in the day his opportunity came. He and his nephew were walking and with them was a hunting dog who was dashing about with great delight. "Ned was unhappy in town," the young man said; "it gives him new life to get out into the country, but he suffered agonies of terror on the short train here."

"If he is so afraid, isn't it cruel to make him take the journey?" questioned his uncle. "What! when he is to have the country for a whole month?" exclaimed his nephew: "But I suppose," he continued laughing, "Ned did think me a demon of cruelty."

"Doesn't it occur to you," the older man then said, "that the passage of death, which lasts but a moment, may seem to God of no more importance than this very journey does to you? We shudder when we read of a hundred women hurried to what appears to be premature death, but it seems to me that God has only ordered them to make a brief journey to live in another place."

"You mean," slowly the young man said, "that I understand God and his ways as little as Ned understands me and my ways?"

A Mother who prayed that her Babe might die. "You do not understand such grief as mine!" a bereaved mother said to the wife of her gardener who was busily engaged about some work in her room. "No," said the woman,

gently, "no one but God can tell what is in the heart. No one can understand just how much a human heart is bearing. Grief is sometimes for the living and sometimes for the dead. Your son has left almost as much happiness with you as he has grief. You can't see it now, but by and by little memories will come—and then you will know.

"With me it's different. You said I couldn't understand, and I can't. That is because there will never be any happy memories for me. You see, when my baby was born—something was wrong, and he never laughed up into my face the way other babies do. All his baby time was sullen and so troublesome. Then we used to hope for the time when he would be older and we could show him the way. But when that time came there was more trouble than ever. We were always excusing him and asking pardon for him and some one was always coming to tell us something he had done, until we came to know he wasn't right.

"After that we had to stand between him and punishments he didn't deserve. After a long while we began to see the light go out within him, and then—how I used to torture the night with prayers that he would go safe to God before he could do any terrible deed! In those days it seemed to me to be the only way out of harm. My prayers were never heard,—anyway they were never answered,—and he grew bigger and stronger—oh, how I dreaded to see that strength! One awful day—a black day—he did the deed!"

In a little while she went on: "The state took care of him after that. For years I had to see my boy with bars between us, and I saw him grow into a bearded man whom I did not know, and who never knew me. The real light all just went out and left that other thing that men watched. That was how my baby grew up.

"I can't understand grief like yours—I have'nt any experience to understand it with. Death to me is a sweet, comforting mother, that takes back its own and remakes it—I believe." *Youth's Companion.*

The Legend's Lesson. A young boy searched long and far for the Garden of God, for he wanted a leaf from the tree of life with which to cure his sister, who was very, very ill. At last he found the Garden and told his errand to the angel at the gate. The angel answered: "If your sister is healed, can you know that she will never be sick again, never again be hungry or tired, never again suffer in any way?" No, the lad did not think this would be true. "Then take a look into the Garden," said the angel, "And if you still want the leaf, I will get it for you." The lad saw the beauty and the blessedness there, and as he turned away homeward, said thoughtfully to the angel: "I will not ask for the leaf now that I have seen the glory of heaven. There is no country so beautiful and happy as this. I cannot wish to keep my sister away."

III Missionary Topic Death in Heathen Lands

Calling the Spirit. On the brick bed lies a baby moaning in the delirium of fever, in its black eyes no gleam of recognition as the mother bends over it. She glances at the sun. It is just noon—the lucky moment. Seizing the child's little garment she runs to the door, and facing due south waves in the air the gay coat of many colors, all the time calling the child's name, "Chia-li pa! Chia-li pa!" (Come home! Come home!)

She believes that if a child becomes unconscious it is because his spirit has wandered away from the body, and like a frightened bird is beating its wings helplessly in the narrow lanes of the city, or fluttering over the fields. If it can but see the familiar little garment of which it had been so proud, it may be drawn home and the child recover. She hurries back. Yes, yes, the child is cooler, the fever leaving. But soon how very cold it becomes, and how quiet the restless hands and limbs! Ah, the soul has truly gone, gone on its long journey into the Great Mystery! From the string of cash she chooses a large one, and crowds it between the little teeth. It will pay the grim old ferryman to carry the childish spirit across the Buddhist Styx. And after that? Who knows? Had not China's greatest sage confessed, "If we do not know the present, how can we know the future?" *Mary Swail Taft.*

Contrasted Scenes in Africa. A Congo missionary writes thus about two funerals he attended in his village. Before the burial of a little child, the heathen mother ran up and down the streets of the native village, shrieking at

the top of her voice, tearing her hair and breast. To her, the village was infested with evil spirits, who had taken away the spirit of her child. At the burial she was held by force from casting herself into the grave upon the body of her child. The following day the Christian wife of a native evangelist was buried. In calmness and peace he recited the burial ceremony above her grave and sang with beautiful faith the hymn, "My faith Looks up to Thee."

The Change that Christianity makes. John G. Paton, the famous missionary to the island of the New Hebrides, gives this account of the death of Namakei, once a cannibal, his first convert to Christianity.

"Missi, I am near to die!" exclaimed Namakei. "I have asked you to come and say farewell. Tell my daughter, my brother, and my people to go on pleasing Jesus, and I will meet them again in the fair world."

I tried to encourage him, saying that God might raise him up again and restore him to his people; but he faintly whispered: "O Missi, death is already touching me! I feel my feet going away from under me. Help me to lie down under the shade of that banyan tree."

So saying, he seized my arm, we staggered near to the tree, and he lay down under its cool shade. He whispered again: "I am going! O missi, let me hear your words rising up in prayer, and then my soul will be strong to go!"

Amidst many choking sobs I tried to pray. At last he took my hand, pressed it to his heart, and said in a stronger and clearer tone: "O my Missi, my dear Missi, I go before you, but I will meet you again in the home of Jesus. Farewell!"

That was the last effort of dissolving strength; he immediately became unconscious, and fell asleep. He was my first Aniwan convert—the first who ever on that island opened his heart to Jesus; and as he lay there on the leaves and grass, my soul soared upward after his; and all the harps of God seemed to thrill with song as Jesus presented to the Father this trophy of redeeming love. Next morning all the members of our synod followed his remains to the grave. There we stood, the white missionaries of the cross from far-distant lands, mingling our tears with Christian natives of Aneityum, and letting them fall over one who only a few years before was a blood-stained cannibal, and whom now we mourned as a brother, a saint, an apostle amongst his people. Ye ask an explanation? The Christ entered into his heart, and Namakei became a new creature. "Behold, I make all things new."

SENTENCE SERMONS

I thank thee, O Father, that there is a voice within me which contradicts the silence of death. *George Matheson.*

The mortal corpse doth not now rise again, but the soul (spirit) doth rise again which lay dead in a living body. *Augustine.*

Whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life. Jn. 3.15.

If I thought that life becomes extinct, it would be difficult to persuade me that it is revived again after a long and dreary sleep, but I do not believe that life ever becomes extinct: I may be said to believe in resurrection because I do not believe in death. *Dr. Lyman Abbott.*

We are God's sons and daughters, sharing the infinite life. *E. E. Hale.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Jairus the Pharisee forgot all self-righteousness and scorn of the lowly Nazarene and fear of his colleagues' criticism when grievous trouble came to his home and he needed Christ's help; and Christ gave help to the proud Pharisee as readily as to humble publicans and sinners. Christ is ever ready to meet every one more than half way.

The power to raise the dead Jesus did not often exercise. It would be rather a dangerous power to put into our clumsy hands. But the power to comfort, to cheer, to love, to help, day by day, he exercised all the time. And that power he freely transmits. It is vastly better than the other both for all his uses and for ours. *Bishop W. F. McDowell.*

Greater than the miracle of raising a dead girl to life are Christ's miracles of raising men and women dead in trespasses and sins to lives of Christian usefulness.

THE RULER'S DAUGHTER

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

A great crowd of people awaited Jesus' return to Capernaum after his trip across to the other side of the Lake. While he was talking to them, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came in haste and falling down at Jesus' feet begged him to come home with him and restore to health his twelve-year-old daughter who lay at the point of death.

Jesus started away with Jairus, attended by a crowd of people. In the midst of the crowd was a woman who had been ill for twelve years and had spent all her money on physicians without being helped. Pressing forward, she touched the hem of Jesus' garment, for she believed that the touch would cure her. At once Jesus asked, "Who touched my garments?" "The crowd is pressing thee," the disciples answered, but a woman fell down at his feet in fear and trembling, and told what she had done. "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace," said the compassionate Physician.

While Jesus was speaking a messenger came from the ruler's home with the sad tidings that the daughter was dead. "Why trouble the Teacher further?" the messenger added. "Fear not, only believe," were Jesus' comforting words to the father, as he kept on, permitting only Peter and James and John to go with them. They reached the house where great confusion prevailed, the noise of flute-playing mingling with the wailing of hired mourners. "Why this noise and weeping?" Jesus questioned; "the child is not dead, but sleeping." He was answered with scornful laughter. Jesus dismissed the mourners and with the child's parents and his three disciples entered the chamber where the dead girl lay. "Talitha cumi," "Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise," said Jesus as he took her hand; at once she obeyed. Great was the amazement of the people, but Jesus charged them not to make the miracle known and then thoughtfully ordered food brought to the maiden.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The responsiveness of Christ.
2. The thoughtful kindnesses of Christ.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. How many lessons have we had this year from Luke's Gospel? What were they? 2. How does Luke's Gospel differ from the first two Gospels? (Clipping, page 32.) 3. Where was Nazareth and what can you tell about the village? (Clipping, page 316.) 4. Where did Jesus make his home during his ministry? 5. Read the accounts of a rejection at Nazareth in Mt. 13.54-58 and Mk. 6.1-6: do these refer to the same account as that of our lesson? (Clipping, page 315.) 6. Describe a synagogue and its services. (Clipping, page 314.) 7. What claims of Jesus have our lessons already included? 8. What does Mark say about the "mighty works" of Jesus at Nazareth? (Mk. 6.5, 6.) 9. Who had once asked whether any good thing could come out of Nazareth? (Jn. 1.46.) 10. There are only two things at which Jesus is said to have marveled, and one of them was on visiting Nazareth. What was it? (Mk. 6.6.)

Questions to think about. 1. What does the assertion in v. 21 mean? 2. What did the people mean by their question, Is not this Joseph's Son? (Clipping, page 318.) 3. How can you explain the jealousy of the Nazarenes? (Clipping, page 319.) 4. When Jesus was a youth what did the people of Nazareth think about him? (Lk. 2.52.) 5. What did Jesus mean by his use of the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself?" (Clipping, page 313.) 6. What early temptation does it recall? (Lesson VIII, First Quarter.) 7. What do the references to the prophets Elijah and Elisha imply? 8. Recall the stories referred to by Jesus, which we studied last year. 9. Why should you go to church? 10. What excuses do you sometimes make to yourself for not going? Would such things keep you away from school or from a pleasure trip?

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

THE VISIT TO NAZARETH

A.D 27 Place Nazareth

Golden Text

He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. John 1.11

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 4.16-30. The Visit to Nazareth. **T.** Isa. 61.1-9. Herald of Good Tidings. **W.** Jer. 26.16-24. Perils of God's Messengers. **T.** Acts 5.17-32. God's Care for his Messengers. **F.** Acts 4.13-21. Boldness of Peter and John. **S.** Acts 16.19-34. Deliverance of Paul and Silas. **S.** Psalm 91. Security of the Trustful Man. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 4.16-30 COMMIT vv 18, 19

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered
as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up to read.
17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he
opened the book, and found the place where it was written,
18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.
20 And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down:
and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began
to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears. 22 And
all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out
of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son? 23 And he said unto
them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself: what-
soever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in thine own country.
24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own
country. 25 But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel
in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months,
when there came a great famine over all the land: 26 and unto none of them
was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that
was a widow. 27 And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha
the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. 28
And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they heard these things:
29 and they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the
brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down
headlong. 30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

16. *Where he had been brought up.* Lk. 2.39, 51.—*As his custom was.* It had been his custom throughout his life in Nazareth not only to attend the synagogue services, but also to stand up and read the lessons. "Even boys under age were allowed to do this."—*Stood up.* "They do not read the law otherwise than standing up," said the rabbis: "Nay, it is unlawful for him that readeth to lean upon anything."—*To read.* He must have read the Hebrew and then either he or the methurgeman, (interpreter) translated and interpreted it in Aramaic, the popular dialect.

17-19. *There was delivered unto him.* By the attendant, v. 30. "Literally the expression is 'There was *further* handed to him,' and it means that after he, or another, had read the *Parashah*, or First-Lesson, which was always from

the Pentateuch, the clerk handed to him the Roll of Isaiah, which contained the *Haphtarah,* or Second Lesson" (*Farrar*).—*The book.* Or, *a roll,* RVm.—*He opened.* Unrolled.—*Found the place where it was written.* Isa. 61.1, 2 and 58.6. This may have been the lesson regularly appointed for the day, but it seems rather to have been expressly chosen by Jesus and adapted, for as recorded in Luke it differs from the original in Isaiah.—"In Isaiah this is a soliloquy of the Righteous Servant of Jehovah whom our Lord identifies with himself."—*Because.* Or, *Wherefore,* RVm.—*He anointed me.* At the baptism. —*Good tidings.* Or, *the gospel,* RVm.—*Release to the captives.* In Isaiah this refers to the release from captivity in Babylon: Jesus applies it to release from sin.—*Recovery of sight.* For those spiritually blind.—*To set at liberty them that are bruised.* Here he turned back to Isa. 58.6, for this corresponds with "to let the oppressed go free." "The rabbis said, The reader of the prophet may skip from one text to another, but he may not skip from prophet to prophet, but in the twelve (minor) prophets it is lawful" (*Dummelow*).—*The acceptable year of the Lord.* In Isaiah, the year of the return from captivity: Jesus applies it to the time of his public ministry.

20-21. *He closed the book.* When the reading was to be followed by a sermon, it was always brief.—*Sat down.* The sermon or exposition was always delivered sitting.—*He began to say unto them.* Luke has recorded not the whole, but the substance, *Bengel.*

22. *Bare him witness.* Their expressions of wonder at his words bore witness to his power.—*And wondered at the words of grace.* Since he is so wise he must be the Son of God, they should have said: instead, they said, Since he is the son of Joseph how can he be so wise?—*And.* "Rather, *but* they said, according to the Hebrew idiom which has only one word for *and* and *but.*"—*Is not this Joseph's son?* How, then, could he be the Messiah or even a prophet? Compare Mt. 13.55; Mk. 6.3; Jn. 6.42. "The Jews in their synagogue did not sit in silence, but were accustomed to give full expression to their feelings, and to discuss and make remarks aloud" (*Farrar*).

23-24. *Doubtless.* You are surprised at my claims, you will next demand "a sign" or miracle in proof thereof.—*Whatsoever you have heard done at Capernaum.* See the Historical Background.—*Physician, heal thyself.* By his use of this common proverb Jesus means that the people of Nazareth regard him as suffering from their lack of belief in him, he could recover from this malady by working a miracle that would convince them of the truth of his claims.—*No prophet is acceptable in his own country.* You will find that few of the most prudent and wisest of mankind have been appreciated in their own country, *Plutarch. His own country* here is Nazareth.

25-27. In these words Jesus refuses to work a miracle for them; "because of their unbelief," Matthew tells us, and implies that like the two prophets mentioned he will grant his favors to those outside " his own country."—*Three years and six months.* According to 1 K. 17.1; 18.1 rain fell again in the third year: *three and one-half years* accord with Jewish usage, that period being the traditional duration of great calamities.—*Zarephath.* Greek, *Sarepta,* RVm.—*Naaman.* See 2 K. 5.1-14.

28-30. *They were all filled with wrath.* Because of Jesus' claims for himself and his rebuke of them.—*That they might throw him down.* Stoning was the punishment for blasphemy, and throwing him down headlong over the cliff was regarded as a form of stoning: see 2 Ch. 25.12.—*Passing through the midst of them.* Whether he escaped in a miraculous manner, or whether his tormentors were overcome by his majestic power and allowed him to escape, is not indicated.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

20. *And he closed the book.* He never finished the passage. A terrible word, Vengeance, yawned like a precipice across his path; and in the middle of a sentence "he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down." A Day of Vengeance from our God—these were the words before which Christ paused. When the prophet Isaiah proclaimed it some great historical fulfillment was in his mind. Had the people to whom Christ read been able to understand its ethical equivalents he would probably have read on. For, so understood,

instead of filling the mind with fear, the thought of this dread Day inspires it with a solemn gratitude. It is part of God's philanthropy. When is that Day of Vengeance? It is now. Who is the Avenger? Law. What Law? Criminal Law, Sanitary Law, Social Law, Natural Law. Wherever the poor are trodden upon or tread upon one another; wherever the air is poison and the water foul; wherever want stares and vice reigns and rags rot—there the Avenger takes his stand. Whatever makes it more difficult for the drunkard to reform, for the children to be pure, for the widow to earn a wage, for any of the wheels of progress to revolve—with these he deals. Delay him not. He is the messenger of Christ. Despair of him not, distrust him not. His Day dawns slowly, but his work is sure. *Henry Drummond* in *The Program of Christianity.*

21. *To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.* It is the inspired record (inspired because in this wonderfully natural way men were guided of God to do things far larger than they conceived) of the great revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament, in ways the men who wrote it never dreamed, is the record of the progressive preparation of the world for his coming; in the New in the fulness of time he stands before us, lives his life of love, speaks his wondrous words, is crucified and risen; in the New, too, we see the influence of his life and words and death and resurrection upon the men who were nearest to him, the small beginnings of the Kingdom that, slowly coming even yet, is destined everywhere to triumph. The permanence of the Bible is the permanence of him into whose presence it leads: as there can never be a greater and more satisfying revelation of God than the love of Christ, so there can never be a greater record of that revelation than the Bible. *Alexander MacColl,* in *A Working Theology.*

22. *All wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth.* Whence had this man his wisdom and mighty works? Born in that humble home, reared in that secluded village, shut out from the world's culture, buried, as it were, among an exclusive and abhorred people, how came he to tower above all teachers, and to sway the world? With whom took he counsel? and who instructed him and taught him? The character and work of Christ, compared with the circumstances of his origin and environment, are an insoluble riddle, except on one supposition—that he was the Word and Power of God. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Expositions of Scripture.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

16. *He entered into the synagogue and stood up to read.* The end of the synagogues always faced Jerusalem. On one side of the room sat the men; on the other, behind a lattice, sat the veiled women. The chief article of furniture was the chest, or ark, of painted wood, before which usually hung a curtain. This ark contained the sacred rolls of the Law and the Prophets. Before the ark and facing the people were the chief seats for the Ruler of the Synagogue and the elders, and the one who led the devotions. In the middle of the synagogue was the *bema* or platform on which there was a desk from which the Law was read. There were no regularly appointed readers nor preachers, and it was the custom of the Ruler to invite any distinguished or competent persons for the services. It may seem strange that the exposition of the Scriptures, to which so much importance was attached, should be left to chance, but the risk was not so great as may appear, because there existed everywhere a class of trained students of the Bible, the Scribes and Rabbis. The rabbis gave their services gratuitously, at least that was the ideal they professed, and they earned their living by practicing some secular trade. The scribes, as the name indicates, were in the first place copyists of the Scriptures, who made the copies for the synagogues and also for private persons who could afford to buy them. They were also the

Synagogue Chest, Showing Rolls.

lawyers, for the law of Moses was the law of the land. But their chief duty was to expound the Scriptures in the synagogues, and there they were as prominent figures as the priest was in the temple.

The morning service began in the synagogue at nine o'clock. The Reader recited the Eighteen Prayers—the congregation answering with their Amen—for though the prayers might be abridged on other days, they could not be on the Sabbath. Next came the first lesson of the day, the people rising and chanting the words after the Reader. Another lesson followed. The Books had been divided by the scribes into well-arranged lessons, and these were read in regular order. The reader always stood, and beside him was the *Methurgeman*, or Interpreter, for the Sacred Books were in Hebrew, and the words were translated into Aramaic, the common language of the country. Then came the Exhortation, delivered sitting. *Based on the writings of Drs. Edersheim, Stapfer, Stalker and Farrar.*

A Book of the Law.

24. *No prophet is acceptable in his own country.* A popular proverb says: "Those who know thee when little will not respect thee when thou becomest big" (noted), and this seems to be true now. For example, a Syrian will pass by many native doctors and employ a foreign physician, and consequently native graduates emigrate to Egypt, the Sudan and the United States, etc., and attain success there. A native manufactured article is despised, and consequently the stores in Nazareth and all over Syria are full of foreign goods. A native journal, just come in, states a fact and comments on it bitterly, viz. that in a native school the native teachers receive from thirty to forty francs a month, while a foreigner is made head teacher and receives four hundred francs a month. *Goshn el Howie,* in *The Expositor.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An account of a visit made by Jesus to Nazareth when he preached in the synagogue and the people were amazed at his wisdom and his mighty works, because they had known him as the carpenter's son, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joseph and Simon and Judas and of sisters who were still of themselves, is recorded by Matthew (13.54-58) as happening after the giving of the parables of the Kingdom at Capernaum, and by Mark (6.1-6) as taking place directly after the raising of Jairus' daughter, our last lesson. Whether this visit and the one recorded by Luke which has been selected for our lesson to-day are one and the same can not be settled. Luke seems to place the sermon and the rejection at Nazareth at the very beginning of the Galilean ministry, and it would seem unlikely that after having nearly lost his life at the hands of his former fellow townsmen, Jesus would later again visit Nazareth. But while Luke places this sermon in his home town at the commencement of Jesus' history, as Jesus' inaugural discourse after the choosing of the twelve, he tells us at the same time that it was after a ministry of some duration at Capernaum, verse 23. The event really occurred at the late period implied in the accounts of the first and secoud Gospels, Dr. A. B. Bruce thinks, and gives this as Luke's reason for placing it at the beginning of his Gospel: The whole scene in the synagogue from beginning to end is full of typical significance. Commencing with evangelic discourse, and closing with death-perils, it may be said to be an epitome of the history of Jesus, and therefore Luke has selected it for the frontispiece of his Gospel, showing by sample the salient features of its contents. It is a worthy frontispiece, in respect both of the *grace* and of the *universality* of the Gospel.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Nazareth was a little village encircled by the hills of Lower Galilee on the edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, a day's journey from Capernaum on the lakeside. The cliff down which the people wished to hurl Jesus was perhaps the limestone rock thirty or forty feet high, which towers above the present Maronite Convent. The cliff called the "Mount of Precipitation" is two miles from the village, and therefore farther than they would have gone on the Sabbath.

From the hills above the village one could see Shunem where an upper room had been kept in readiness for Elisha, and Mount Carmel, where Elijah had his contest with the priests of Baal. These scenes so familiar to Jesus would naturally call to his mind at this time the work of these prophets.

Assign paragraphs 162-164, 108-112, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Show Tissot's "Jesus in the Synagogue," No. 19. The scene in the synagogue you can make real, and the program of Jesus' ministry and work which he came to do, you can explain by recalling earlier lessons and scenes where Jesus went about doing good. The reason why the people of Nazareth rejected Jesus your pupils can not readily grasp; for they have not yet learned to undervalue what is familiar, so do not dwell upon this. Do not attempt to teach the last half of the lesson, merely saying that though Jesus had come to do them good the people of Nazareth would not receive him, but forced him to leave Nazareth. Recall Jesus' visit to the temple when twelve years old, and emphasize his habit of "going to church." Urge your pupils to form the same habit. If your pastor gives a special talk to children at the church service, question them about it.

On the mantle-piece of my grandmother's best parlor, among other marvels, was an apple in a phial, Mr. Spurgeon tells us. It quite filled up the body of the bottle, and my childish wonderment was: "How could it have got there?" By stealth I climbed a chair to see if the bottom could unscrew, or if there had been a joint in the glass throughout the length of the phial. I was satisfied by careful examination that the bottle had neither of these, and the apple remained to me a mystery. One day, walking in the garden, I saw it all. There on a tree was a phial tied and within it a tiny apple, which was growing within the crystal. The apple was put into the bottle while it was little, and it grew there. Just so the boys and girls must come within the influence of the church when they are little and grow there.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Of course you have heard of George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive. His father was fireman of a colliery engine at Wylam, near Newcastle, England, and George worked in the colliery when he was a lad. When the one hundredth anniversary of his birthday was being celebrated at Newcastle with great ceremony, a great procession of craftsmen and tradesmen marched through the city, and among them was a little group of colliers from Wylam who carried a banner inscribed, "He was one of us." They were very proud of the fact that a man from their village, a collier like themselves, was genius enough to invent the great locomotive.

In what village was Jesus brought up? As a lad he helped his father Joseph in the carpenter's shop of Nazareth, and was himself a carpenter when older. The people of Nazareth knew that "He was one of them," and they knew that he had wonderful power; were they proud of him? What does our Golden Text say?

For Older Pupils. "I wonder," said Gypsy Smith in a sermon, "if Jesus Christ should come to some of our churches to-day, if he would be a welcome guest. I wonder if he came if we should recognize him. I wonder if he came to some church where there wasn't a pastor, if he would be invited to fill the pulpit." We may well keep these thoughts in mind as we study the treatment Jesus received when he came to the synagogue at Nazareth. How were the services of the synagogue conducted? See page 315.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Church Habit

As his Custom was. It was the custom, the habit, of Jesus to attend the synagogue services on the Sabbath. As soon as he could walk he was taken to the synagogue by Mary, his mother. All through his youth, while growing in grace and in favor with God and man, he went regularly to the synagogue to worship, and in his young manhood he continued the custom. Although he was sinless, he felt the need of worship, and for his own sake as well as for the sake of others, he was a regular and reverent worshipper in the house of the Lord. Once a year he attended the great festival in the temple at Jerusalem. On the other Sabbaths he was found in the synagogue at Nazareth or wherever he might be during his public ministry.

Custom is the fifth element in the universe, says a Syrian proverb. Habit is ten times nature, said the Duke of Wellington. Better a boy's complaint about the rigidity of parental insistence upon church attendance, declares Bishop John H. Vincent, than a man's censure of home laxity during the habit-making years of life.

"I remember blaming my mother for sending me to church on the Sabbath," Mr. Moody once said. "On one occasion the preacher had to send some one into the gallery to wake me up. I thought it was hard to have to work in the field all the week, and then be obliged to go to church and hear a sermon I didn't understand. I thought I wouldn't go to church any more when I got away from home, but I had got so in the habit of going I couldn't stay away. After one or two Sabbaths, back again to the house of God I went. There I first found Christ, and I have often said since, 'Mother, I thank you for making me go to the house of God when I didn't want to go.'"

Is the Church Habit Waning? We hear contradictory statements in regard to the church habit of to-day. In our nation church membership is growing faster than the population; the religious census of the country taken two years ago showed this. There were then nearly thirty-three million church members, one person in every three of the population, including children. The increase in the cities is greater than in the country districts. But in connection with this census report we need to recall the fact that in some churches all infants baptized are counted as belonging to the church, while in others only those who have voluntarily joined the church are so enrolled.

Not all church members, however, have the church habit. How many of these thirty-three million church-members are regular church goers? We have never thought of Chicago as noted for its religious life, yet when more than two million persons there were asked whether they were in the habit of going to church, nearly one half replied that they were regular attendants, and about one quarter of them attended irregularly. Noticeable here is the desire, at least, to be classed among church-goers.

It is probable, declares an optimistic paper, that the prevailing impression regarding the decline of church going is unfounded, for there never was a time when clergymen of all denominations were working more harmoniously for the moral uplifting of the people. Not many Sunday evenings ago a young man in Boston started for church with a friend. He was in good time, but the church which he had selected was so crowded when he reached it that he could not get a seat. He met similar crowds in three or four other places, but persisted until he finally found one in which there was room for him. Unless all reports are misleading, similar conditions prevail on the Pacific coast.

Nevertheless this note of warning sounded by the Philadelphia Press is needed the country over. "A more vivid sense of responsibility for the church habit is needed, not only in the church but outside it. In a great city like Philadelphia there are men by the ten thousands, able, successful, prosperous, earning fair incomes, who would regard it as a calamity if churches were to disappear. They want a clergyman at baptism, marriage and a funeral, and they want Sunday-schools for their children. They believe in the value of the church as an organization. They like to feel that it is active. They admire and approve its work. But they do nothing for it. They neither attend nor support it. They forget their personal responsibility."

Sunday School Members should also be Church-Goers. Twenty per cent. of the American-born Protestant population are regular church-goers; thirty per cent. more have their names on church books and are irregular church-goers. We hear that eighty-five per cent. of the membership of the church comes from the Sunday-school, but that is very far from meaning that eighty-five per cent. of the Sunday-school membership comes into the church. What about the very large membership of the Sunday-school who do not come into the church? Forty per cent. of the non-churchgoers, which constitutes half of the American-born Protestant population, used to go to Sunday-school at some time or other between the ages of five and fifteen. Seventy-five per cent. of the boys that enter the Intermediate Department of the Sunday-school never come into the church. How is it in your church and Sunday-school?

Dr. Robert Burdette on "Not Going to Church." So you are not going to church this morning, my son? Ah, yes; I see. "The music is not good". that is a pity: that's what you go to church for—to hear music. And the less we pay, the better the music we demand.

"And the pews are not comfortable", that's too bad—the Lord's day is a day of rest, and we go to church for repose. The less work we do during the week, the more rest we clamor for on Sunday.

"The church is so far away; it is too far to walk, and you detest riding in a street car, and they are always crowded on Sunday." That is indeed distressing; sometimes when I think how much farther away heaven is than the church, and that there are no conveyances of any description on the road, I wonder how some of us are going to get there.

"And the sermon is always too long." All these things are indeed to be regretted. I would regret them more sincerely, my boy, did I not know that you will often squeeze into a stuffed car with a hundred men, breathing an incense of whisky, beer, tobacco, and hang on a strap by your eyelids for two miles, then pay fifty cents for the privilege of sitting on a rough plank in the boiling sun for two hours longer, while in the intervals of the game a scratch band will blow discordant thunder out of a dozen misfit horns right in your very ears, and come home to talk the rest of the family into a state of aural paralysis about the "dandiest game you ever saw played."

Ah, my boy, you see what staying away from church does? It develops a habit of lying. There could not one man in a hundred who could go on the witness stand and give oath, render the same reasons for not going to church that he gives to his family every Sunday morning. My son, if you didn't think you ought to go, you wouldn't make any excuse for not going. No man apologizes for doing right.

II No Prophet is Acceptable in His Own Country

He came unto his Own and they that were his Own received him not. Jesus recognized that his rejection at Nazareth was due to a universal trait of human nature. Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country; or as Mark more forcibly expresses it, A prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kin and in his own house. The treatment which Jesus received from his fellow-townsmen recalls the treatment meted out to an Old Testament prophet in his home town. You remember Jeremiah was brought up at Anathoth, a little town where the priests lived. When the priests learned that he who was one of them had become a prophet, they threw stones at him in an attempt to kill him. Is not this Joseph's son? the people of Nazareth had whispered about. In the words of Dean Hodges: "Some said, 'These are bold sayings for a carpenter.' Joseph's son is taking much upon himself. And they remembered how he had been one of them all his life long, and some were his cousins, and some had held the ladder while he mended the wall, and some lived next door to his married sisters and did not like them very well, and some had hired him by the day to do their work."

People are naturally slow to believe great things of one with whom they have been familiar from childhood, and singularly enough each one feels a bit jealous when distinction comes to one whom he knows well. Absurd as it is that one should feel that honor accorded an acquaintance detracts from one's own, yet that is the first impulsive thought of many a one who would not own the

fact even to himself. "James a United States Senator!" he exclaims; "Why, we were brought up together, and he is no smarter than I am; why should he be famous and I unknown? How many follies of his boyhood I can recall! How stupid he was in arithmetic at school; and I excelled him in scholarship at college. What has he done that an honor should come to him? And why am I not rightly appreciated?"

Even in the Chinese mission field the prophet is without honor in his own country still. Two Chinese students wished to teach "the Jesus way," each in his own village, but in both places the people refused to hear them. "You are but a child," they said; "shame on you to try to instruct your elders." The two lived only fifteen miles apart, so they changed villages, and then each one was listened to with respect!

A Grave Danger. No man is a hero to his own valet. Far-away birds have fine feathers. Familiarity breeds contempt. These familiar proverbs tell the same truth as that in Jewish dress—A prophet is not without honor save in his own country. "The farther off I am read from my own home;" complained Montaigne, "the better I am esteemed." It is said that Pericles would never dine abroad lest he should be cheapened in the estimation of the company by the familiarity of social intercourse.

> "Bonnet in hand, obsequious and discreet,
> The butcher that served Shakespeare with his meat
> Doubtless esteemed him little, as a man
> Who knew not how the market-prices ran."

There is a tradition among the peasants in Little Russia that the Archangel Michael descended from Heaven at the time of the spring planting and abode among them so as to teach them the way to Heaven. At first they dared not look at him, so awe-inspiring was his presence. By the time the corn began to grow they had become accustomed to him, but still obeyed him humbly. But when the corn was in blossom they had ceased to obey him, and when it had ripened they drove him off with stones.

There are blessings that have come into the life of every one of us which he is in danger of overlooking because he takes them as a matter of course, or even of despising simply because they are so familiar. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

III Missionary Topic The Program of Christianity

The Program. "What does God do all day?" once asked a little boy. One could wish that more grown-up people would ask so very real a question. Unfortunately, most of us are not even boys in religious intelligence, but only very unthinking children. It no more occurs to us that God is engaged in any particular work in the world than it occurs to a little child that its father does anything except be its father. Its father may be a Cabinet Minister absorbed in the nation's work, or an inventor deep in schemes for the world's good; but to this master-egotist he is father, and nothing more.

But as clearly as there comes to the growing child a knowledge of its father's part in the world, and a sense of what real life means, there must come to every Christian whose growth is true some richer sense of the meaning of Christianity and a larger view of Christ's purpose for mankind. To miss this is to miss the whole splendor and glory of Christ's religion. The first great epoch in a Christian's life, after the awe and wonder of its dawn, is when there breaks into his mind some sense that Christ has a purpose for mankind, a purpose beyond him and his needs, beyond the churches and their creeds, beyond Heaven and its saints—a purpose which embraces every man and woman born, every kindred and nation formed, which regards not their spiritual good alone, but their welfare in every part, their progress, their health, their work, their wages, their happiness in this present world.

What, then, does Christ do all day? His immediate work was to enlist men in his enterprise, to rally them into a great company or society for the carrying out of his plans. The name by which this society was known was The Kingdom of God. Hundreds of years before Christ's Society was formed, its Program had been issued to the world. I cannot think of any scene in history more dramatic than when Jesus read it to the people in Nazareth.

Remember as you read the words to what grim reality they refer. Recall what Christ's problem really was, what his Society was founded for. This program deals with a real world. Think of it as you read—not of the surface-world, but of the world as it is, as it sins and weeps, and curses and suffers, and sends up its long cry to God. Limit it if you like to the world around your door, but think of it— of the city and the hospital and the dungeon and the graveyard, of the sweat-shop and the pawn-shop, and the drink-shop; think of the cold, the cruelty, the fever, the famine, the ugliness, the loneliness, the pain. And then try to keep down the lump in your throat as you take up his Program and read—

"To Bind up the Broken-hearted:
To Proclaim Liberty to the Captives:
To Comfort all that Mourn:
Go Give unto Them—
Beauty for Ashes,
The Oil of Joy for Mourning,
The Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness."

Men are the only means God's Spirit has of accomplishing his purpose. What men? You. Is it worth doing, or is it not? Is it worth while joining Christ's Society, or is it not? What do you do all day? What is your personal stake in the coming of the Kingdom of Christ on earth? Condensed from *The Program of Christianity*, by *Professor Henry Drummond.*

The Transference of Privilege Despised. Text and sermon are most characteristic of Christ's whole ministry. No better motto could be found for that ministry than the prophetic oracle read in the synagogue of Nazareth. If Jesus did not actually preach his *first* discourse from it, he might have done so, taking occasion therefrom to draw out a program of his work as the inaugurator of the acceptable year of the Lord.

In respect of the universal destination of the Gospel, this scene is also sufficiently significant. In this connection, indeed, what it supplies is rather omens than distinct intimations. It is hinted that prophets accustomed to receive more honor everywhere than in their own country, are apt to go where they get a good reception. The anger produced by the hint suggests the thought that prophets ill received by their own people may be forced, whether they will or no, to go elsewhere with their message. The attempt on the life of Jesus foreshadows the tragic event through which the prophet of Nazareth hoped to draw to himself the expectant eyes of all men. The departure of Jesus from his native town is a portent of Christianity leaving the sacred soil of Judæa, and stepping forth into the wide world in quest of a new home. Significant traits of all these justly appeared to the eye of Luke the Pauline evangelist. *A. B. Bruce,* in *The Galilean Gospel.*

The Program includes a Saved Man, a Saved Society, a Saved World. If you had been young—a man of thirty, say—there in the synagogue, dear, sleepy, old synagogue, the day Jesus announced his personal and social program in the words of Isaiah, what would you have done? You would have been on your feet in a minute, with a cheer on your lips, because a man with a program, an appeal to the imagination, an outlet for energy, a scope for activity, stood there before you. I can hardly read it or think of it now without wanting to get outdoors, to shout for sheer joy that such a chance exists in the world. Once I saw a drum corps marching down the street, leading a company of old soldiers to a reunion. The drum corps had seen service. The company had in it a cripple or two and a tattered flag. It is more than thirty years now since I saw those marching heroes but the sensation abides. Something like it comes again as I read these words from the synagogue. But the whole story for us now is that by every avenue he meant to approach a man that he might save the whole man, and that a saved man might give humanity a chance in a saved society.

He meant to save a man—that is personal. He meant to save a town—that is social. He meant to save the world—that is what we call missionary. The plan enlarges until it stirs our hearts. Pretty soon you are liable to hear martial music, to see flying banners and to catch the vision of God's majestic march over continents and through centuries. There will be thrones and crowns and

sceptres flashing before your eyes if you will only open them. There will be royal robes and marching armies, new acts of the apostles, nations born in a day, the coming of the Kingdom. We are out in the middle of the stream and its waters wash all shores. His plan included a saved man, a saved society, a saved world. Simply reciting those words makes the blood run fast. *William Fraser McDowell,* in *The School of Christ.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go unto the house of Jehovah. Ps. 122.1.

I have a little plant in my mind called reverence, and I go to worship that it may be watered. *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

To work with Christ's Program and ignore Christ is to utilize the sun's light without its energy. *Professor Drummond.*

That Jesus was a carpenter was to the Nazarites a poor credential of divinity, but it has been a divine credential to the poor ever since. *Dr. M. D. Babcock.*

Many a household has had to wait for death to take away the prophet before they discern him. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Your synagogue is the church. What impression does the word make upon you? Does it call to your mind a feeling of hatred, coldness, or criticism, or a feeling of reverence and love? What is your custom as regards church attendance? Were you at church to-day?

Instead of blaming the Nazarenes for not accepting Jesus, let us take to heart the lesson of their rejection and take heed lest we be equally guilty.

May we not be blind to a messenger of God in our midst just because we have always known him?

The people of Nazareth first marvelled, next envied, then depreciated, then finally hated their fellow Townsman. Take heed lest your admiration for a great deed gives place to these other moods.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The claims of Jesus.
2. What the gospel has done for the poor and the afflicted.
3. The program of Christianity. See Professor Henry Drummond's book with this title.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. Review all that you have already learned about John the Baptist. 2. Where was John imprisoned? (Clipping, page 324.) 3. Was Herod king? (Clipping, page 322.) 4. Of what part of Palestine was Herod tetrarch? (Clipping, page 322.) 5. Was this Herod the Herod to whom the Wise-men came seeking the Babe? (Clipping, page 324.) 6. Read the account of Jephthah's rash vow in Judges. 7. What epithet did Jesus apply to Herod, and what does it tell of Herod's character? (Lk. 13.32.)

Questions to think about. 1. When had the people asked the Baptist if he were Elijah? (Lesson VII, First Quarter.) 2. When had Jesus called the Baptist Elijah? (Lesson XI, Second Quarter.) 3. When had John been equally courageous in denouncing sin? (Lesson VII, First Quarter.) 4. What message had the Baptist sent to Jesus from his prison? 5. What high praise had Jesus given John? 6. In what way was the day "convenient," v. 21? 7. What damsel of the Old Testament was offered half a king's kingdom, as we learned in our last year's lessons? (Esther 5.6.) 8. Did his oath excuse Herod for putting John to death? Why? 9. When is it wrong to keep a promise? 10. What characteristics does Herod show in this account? 11. What expression do we sometimes use which shows our opinion of the Herods? (It out-Herods Herod.) 12. Which of the Beatitudes especially apply to John the Baptist?

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

LESSON IX—SEPTEMBER 1

THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Golden Text

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Rev. 2.10

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 6.14-29. The Death of John the Baptist. **T.** Isa. 28.1-8. Blighting Effects of Revelry. **W.** Dan. 5.1-9. Feasting and Folly. **T.** Amos 7.10-17. A Faithful Minister. **F.** Luke 7.18-28. Greatness of John the Baptist. **S.** Heb. 11.32—12.2. Faithfulness unto Death. **S.** 2 Tim. 4.1-8. Reward of Faithfulness. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 6.14-29 READ Mt. 14.1-12 COMMIT vv 27, 28

14 And king Herod heard *thereof;* for his name had become known: and
he said, John the Baptizer is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers
work in him. 15 But others said, It is Elijah. And others said, *It is* a prophet,
even as one of the prophets. 16 But Herod, when he heard *thereof,* said, John,
whom I beheaded, he is risen. 17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid
hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother
Philip's wife; for he had married her. 18 For John said unto Herod, It is not
lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. 19 And Herodias set herself against
him, and desired to kill him; and she could not; 20 for Herod feared John,
knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. And when
he heard him, he was much perplexed; and he heard him gladly. 21 And when
a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his
lords, and the high captains, and the chief men of Galilee; 22 and when the
daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and them
that sat at meat with him; and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me what-
soever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. 23 And he sware unto her, Whatso-
ever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.
24 And she went out, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she
said, The head of John the Baptizer. 25 And she came in straightway with
haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou forthwith give me on a
platter the head of John the Baptist. 26 And the king was exceeding sorry;
but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat, he would not re-
ject her. 27 And straightway the king sent forth a soldier of his guard, and
commanded to bring his head: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,
28 and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel
gave it to her mother. 29 And when his disciples heard *thereof,* they came and
took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14-16. *King Herod.* This was Herod Antipas, the Son of Herod the Great to whom the Wise-men came. He is called king from courtesy. His title was tetrarch, as in Mt. 14.1: he ruled over Galilee and Perea.—*Heard thereof.* Of the works of Jesus.—*He.* Some ancient authorities read *they,* RVm.—*John the Baptizer.* John the Baptist, Mt. 14.2. His belief grew out of his guilty conscience, verse 16.—*Therefore do these powers work in him.* John had worked no miracles during his lifetime, but Herod thought that he had now new power because risen from the dead.—*It is Elijah.* See Lesson VII, First Quarter.

17-20. His brother Philip. This Philip was a half-brother who lived at Rome. —*For he had married her.* It was unlawful to marry a brother's wife even after his death unless he had no child. Herod divorced his own wife, the daughter

of Aretas King of Arabia. See page 24. Nominally, Herodias had divorced her former husband, but while Jewish usages of that time allowed a man to divorce his wife for almost any cause, as Dr. Broadus explains, for a woman to divorce her husband was a Roman custom, which they held in great abhorrence.—*Feared John.* He also feared the multitude, Mt. 14.5.—*Much perplexed.* Many ancient authorities read *did many things,* RVm.

Coin of Aretas, King of Arabia.

21-29. *A convenient day.* Convenient for Herodias' design.—*High captains.* Or, *military tribunes,* RVm.—*The daughter of Herodias.* Her name was Salome.—*Danced.* It was a Greek, not a Jewish custom, to have professional women dancers at a banquet.—*She.* Or, *it,* RVm.—*He sware unto her.* Compare Jephthah's rash vow, Judges 11.31.—*Even unto the half of my kingdom.* Compare Esther 5.6.—*Give me on a platter.* "As if it were some viand she is speaking of, just so doth she ask for that sacred and blessed head to be brought in in a charger" (*Chrysostom*). The platter was probably of brass.—*His disciples.* John's disciples.—*For the sake of his oaths.* As we learned in Lesson VIII, Second Quarter, Jewish oaths were held binding only when an appeal was made to God in some way.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *But Herod, when he heard thereof, said.* My friends, we all have these hibernating serpents in our consciences, and nobody knows when the needful warmth may come that will wake them and make them lift their forked heads to sting. The whole landscape of my past life lies there behind the mists of apparent forgetfulness, and any light air of suggestion may sweep away the clouds and show it all. What have you laid up in these memories of yours to start into life some day, "at the last biting like a serpent and stinging like an adder"? "It is John! It is John, whom I beheaded!" *Dr. Maclaren.*

16. *John, whom I beheaded.*

He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit in the center, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself in his own dungeon. *Milton,* in *Comus.*

29. *When his disciples heard thereof.* In all Jesus' intercourse with John the Baptist we never can lose remembrance of the relationship between them. The old pictures which have grouped them as children by the Virgin's knee express a feeling which we can never cast aside. It is impossible to make their connection simply official. When John baptizes Jesus, it is a kinsman's hand that leads the exalted Youth into the water. And by and by, when the disciples went to the prison and took the body of the murdered Baptist and buried it, and came and told their Master, it was for one of his own family blood as well as for one of his own divine spirit that Jesus mourned. *Phillips Brooks,* in *The Influence of Jesus.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

22. *The daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced.* We cannot readily determine just how far this act was indecorous on her part. In all eastern countries, women being kept in great seclusion, it has always been considered extremely improper for a woman to dance in public. It is very common to hire dancing-women to exhibit at entertainments (*e. g.* the Hindoo Nautch-girls), but the business is highly disreputable, and it is commonly taken for granted that they are women of bad character. True, Jewish women lived in less seclusion than women in other Eastern nations, and there are instances of their taking part by songs and dancing in public rejoicings (*e. g.* 1 Sam. 18.6); but this was considered a religious act (compare Ex. 15.20; 2 Sam. 6.21), and quite a different thing from taking the place of dancing girls at a feast. The

Romans, too, had their dancing girls at entertainments, but regarded it as a disreputable calling. *John A. Broadus,* in *Commentary on Matthew.*

25. *I will that thou forthwith give me on a platter the head of John the Baptist.* Mark Antony caused the heads of those he had proscribed to be brought to him while he was at table, and entertained his eyes a long time with that sad spectacle. When Cicero's head was brought to him he ordered it to be put on the very pulpit where Cicero had made speeches against him. *James Neil,* in *Oriental Customs.*

28. *And gave it to the damsel and the damsel gave it to her mother.* Agrippina, wife of Claudius, and mother of Nero, who was afterwards emperor, sent an officer to put to death Lollia Paulina, who had been her rival for the imperial dignity. And Dio Cassius says that when Lollias's head was brought to her, not knowing it at first, she examined it with her own hands, till she perceived some particular feature by which that lady was distinguished. I have put down this instance, because it seems to give us the reason of this practice among great people, namely that they might be certain their orders had been executed. *Dr. Lardner,* in *Credibility.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the rejection at Nazareth Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness, Mt. 9.35;Mk. 6.6. The sending forth of the twelve disciples on their mission tour is next recorded. "At that season" (Mt. 14.1), when the report of the mighty works of Jesus was spread abroad, the news came even unto Herod the tetrarch, and he declared that the Doer could be none other than John the Baptist whom he had beheaded. And then Mark turns back to tell how the Baptist had been put to death some time before this.

"King Herod," the murderer of John the Baptist, is Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great to whom the Wisemen came, lesson V, First Quarter. See the Introduction, page 24, for an account of the Herodian family.

Assign paragraphs 172, 113-116, *In the Master's Country.*

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Herod's capital was Tiberias, a town on the Sea of Galilee which he rebuilt and named in honor of the reigning Roman Emperor, Tiberius Cæsar. At Machærus on the border of the desert near the northern end of the Dead Sea, he had a castle and dungeon, and here it was, according to Josephus, that the Baptist was beheaded. Dr. Geikie in his Life of Christ gives this account of Machærus. The first fortress had been raised here by Alexander Jannæus (See page 22), but it was afterwards destroyed by Gabinius in his war against Aristobulus. When Herod came to be king, however, his keen eye saw the strength of the position, and he determined to restore the castle as a frontier defense against the Arabs. Surrounding a large space with walls and towers, he built a city from which a path led up to the citadel on the top of the hill. The citadel itself was at one end of a narrow ridge, nearly a mile in length from east to west, and formed a last retreat in case of attack; but it was not enough for his magnificent ideas. At the other end of the height he raised a great wall, enclosing the summit of the hill, with towers two hundred feet high at the corners, and in the space thus gained built a grand palace, with rows of columns of a single stone apiece, halls lined with many colored marbles, magnificent baths, and all the details of Roman luxury, not omitting huge cisterns, barracks and storehouses, with everything needed for defense in case of siege. The detached citadel was the scene of John's imprisonment, a stern and gloomy keep, with underground dungeons, still visible, hewn down into the living rock. The fortress-palace at the other end of the fortifications, at the time of the residence of Antipas and his retainers, was merry with their revelry, but the dungeon of John lay in midnight darkness. From his windows Antipas had a magnificent view of the Dead Sea, the whole course of the Jordan, Jerusalem, Hebron, the circle of Jordan, and the cliffs of Engedi, on the west, and of the mountains of Gilead, rising beyond the wild heights of Pisgah, on the

north; but his captive, the child of the boundless wilderness, pined in perpetual night. *Dr. Geikie, The Life of Christ.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

You can teach all of this lesson, but do not dwell upon the manner of John's death. Merely say that Salome asked to have John put to death and Herod carried out her wish. There are two ways of presenting the lesson.

(1) You can make Herod the leading character in the story and take Topic I for your theme. Show Fattori's "John in the Presence of Herod," Union Press No. 49. Secure the entire poem of Alice Carey's, page 326, and tell it so vividly that it will teach its own lesson. However unheeding or "bad" your pupils may seem to be, their consciences are active, they will easily understand the story. Give them this child's thought (by Sinclair Lewis):

When all the day I've done des right,
And told no fibs, nor sassed, nor crwied,
When it comes to 'fessing time at night,
I feel all over dood inside.

(2) You can make John the Baptist the leading character, and review the lessons we have had about him, three in the First Quarter, and one in the Second, and conclude with a talk about the Golden Text, adapting Dr. Vance's explanation, page 327.

Give your pupils copies of the stanzas on page 334 to learn for next week.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We had a lesson last year in which a stern prophet accused a weak king of an evil deed to which he had been led by a wicked queen. Who were the prophet, the king and the queen? What was the evil deed? We have a lesson to-day in which three characters are very like those three Old Testament characters. What prophet resembles the prophet Elijah? What king resembles King Ahab? What queen resembles Queen Jezebel?

For Older Pupils. You remember how General Gordon went once all alone to interview a king who was noted for his savage cruelty, and how he refused to accept the unrighteous proposals which the king made. "Do you know that I could have you killed instantly?" the king exclaimed in anger. "I know it perfectly well," General Gordon calmly replied, "but it is a matter of perfect indifference to me." General Gordon's moral courage and fearlessness of death was like John the Baptist's. Where did we last leave the Baptist?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I In the Picture Gallery

The Face that haunted Herod. "You don't need to be told that you are doing wrong," a mother said to a small lad: "down in your heart you know it is wrong." "Yes, I know it way inside of me," the boy slowly admitted, and then quickly added, "but the outside of me doesn't know it—and doesn't want to."

This was Herod Antipas' position. Down in his heart he knew that he was wrongfully keeping John the Baptist in prison and was wrongfully keeping Herodias as his wife, but his outward life did not want to know it, he was unwilling to obey his conscience. Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and yet he feared Herodias more, and therefore kept John in prison. He liked John and was exceeding sorry when Salome demanded his death, but he feared to break his oaths and feared those who sat at meat with him, and therefore ordered John murdered.

Herod would not heed the voice of conscience, but the time came when he could not erase the face drawn by remorse. The face of the prophet whom he beheaded haunted him for ever after. His crime colored his thoughts, so that when he was told of the wonderful deeds of Christ he at once exclaimed that John, whom he beheaded, had risen from the dead. Persius, a Latin poet

who lived during the time of Herod, says that at a later banquet a boiled fish served on a red platter seemed to Herod the severed head of John the Baptist.

The Picture the Old Man saw.

Oh, good painter, tell me true,
Has your hand the cunning to draw
Shapes of things you never saw?
Aye? Well, here is an order for you.

With these words Alice Cary's beautiful poem, "An Order for a Picture," begins. The picture is to be that of two small boys and their mother. The boys had loitered out in the fields one summer night because they were afraid to go home, for one of them had a nest full of eggs and the other a bird. The scene to be put on canvas is when at last the boys stood at their mother's knee. And this is what one of the boys when grown to manhood wished it to show:—

Do you think, sir, if you try,
You can paint the look of a lie?
If you can, pray have the grace
To put it solely in the face
Of the urchin that is likest me:
I think 'twas solely mine, indeed:
But that's no matter,—paint it so;
The eyes of our mother,—(take good heed)—
Looking not on the nestful of eggs,
Nor the fluttering bird, held so fast by the legs,
But straight through our faces down to our lies,
And, oh, with such injured, reproachful surprise!
I felt my heart bleed where that glance went, as though
A sharp blade struck through it. You, sir, know
That you on the canvas are to repeat
Things that are fairest, things most sweet,—
The mother,—the lads, with their bird, at her knee:
But, oh, that look of reproachful woe!
High as the heavens your name I'll shout,
If you paint me the picture, and leave that out.

Every One of us has a Secret Picture Gallery. We cannot rid ourselves of it. We cannot help hanging landscapes and faces on the wall; and once hung, we cannot give them away, nor cover them nor destroy them. Sometimes these pictures delight and comfort us. But, whether for good or ill, we must keep them; we must carry them with us through the gates of death into the unknown life beyond.

There, upon that hidden wall, hangs, perhaps, the face of the friend you wronged, or the boy whom you saved from a drunkard's grave or the mother whom you tended so fondly in her old age. There is a picture of the home you make happy by your work and unselfishness, or some scenes of vice into which you have skulked, as you thought, unseen. Secret as you were, there hangs the picture never to fade. No human eye has looked upon it, but you see it and God sees it. What picture is this day painting for you in that cabinet? *Youth's Companion.*

II Who is Responsible

Whom I beheaded. When the evil deed was done, Herod scarcely felt as if he did it. There was his plighted troth, there was Herodias' pressure, there was the excitement of the moment. He seemed forced to do it, and scarcely responsible for doing it. And no doubt, if he ever thought about it afterwards, he shuffled off a large percentage of the responsibility of the guilt upon the shoulders of the others. But when,

"In the silent sessions of things past,"

the image and remembrance of the deed come up to him, all the helpers and tempters have disappeared, and "It is John, whom I beheaded!" (There is emphasis in the Greek upon the "*I.*") "Yes, it was I. Herodias tempted me; Herodias' daughter titillated my lust; I fancied that my oath bound me; I could

not help doing what would please those who sat at the table. I said all that before I did it. But now, when it is done, they have all disappeared, every one of them to his quarter; and I and the ugly thing are left together alone. It was I that did it, and nobody besides." *Alexander Maclaren,* in *St. Mark.*

Mea Culpa. From the time that Eve blamed the serpent and Adam blamed Eve, people have been trying to make some one else bear the blame for that for which they are responsible, have been seeking some scapegoat to bear their sins even as the high priest on the Day of Atonement symbolically laid the sins of the Hebrew people on the head of a goat and sent it off to perish in the wilderness. When Aaron made the golden calf he excused himself to Moses by saying that it was all the people's fault: "Thou knowest the people that they are set on evil," he said. In a similar way Saul excused himself to Samuel by putting the blame for his disobedience upon the people. "They have brought them from the Amalekites," he said, "the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, the people took of the spoil." Samuel paid no heed to his shallow excuses but declared; "Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

Each one of us shall give account of himself to God, says Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. We may and we often do, give an account of ourselves to others in which we shift all the blame for whatever has been wrong upon some one else, but in our account to God, we must bear the responsibility for our own deeds. When justice is falling, the Chinese say, an excuse is a poor umbrella. At the last we must admit, *Mea Culpa, mea culpa,* I have sinned.

No One can force Another to sin. An excuse, says Dr. M. D. Babcock, is a statement of the circumstances under which we fail to do our duty. "The woman tempted me," said the first excuse-maker, and then he added, not that "She made me eat" but, "And I did eat." "At school what a common thing it is to hear, 'Tom made me whisper', 'Mary made me laugh', 'Jim told me to run away.' When we are honest we have to own that we were not compelled to do wrong. We say, 'I inherited an appetite,' 'The business world pressed me into it,' 'My family require it,' but in our hearts we know that if we had not consented to sin, people and circumstances could not have forced us into it.

"The castle of Man-Soul is often assailed from without, but it is safe, it cannot fall until some one from within consents to open the door to the enemy. And so if Man-Soul is taken we may blame the army without for assailing, but we know that the downfall was due to the traitor within, who admitted the enemy."

III Be Thou Faithful unto Death, and I Will Give Thee a Crown of Life

John the Baptist's Life and Reward. Jesus said of John the Baptist that he was a burning and a shining light, or as the Revised Version reads, he was the lamp that burneth and shineth. Many people are willing to shine, but relatively few are willing to burn and shine. Certainly John's lamp burned with a fierce glow, he never spared himself, he was faithful unto death.

It is said that Henry VIII was wont to drive away all pangs of conscience by excess in eating and drinking, and that true to his life's habit, on his death bed he called for a glass of wine, drank it and then said: *Amici, nunc perdidimus omnia—regnum, vitam, animam:*—Now friends, all is over—my crown, my life, my soul! What an end! Here there was no thought of the crown of life. When Herod the Great was on his death bed he knew the people would rejoice over his death and the thought maddened him: he resolved to give them cause for tears and charged his sister to have massacred at the moment of his death a large number of notables whom he had summoned to Jericho, but she did not carry out his command. Contrast the spirit of these two kings when about to die with that of the prophet who had been faithful unto death, and was sure of the "crown of life."

The Condition and the Promise. The divine command is: Be thou faithful unto death. This sums up what God requires. He does not ask us to be energetic beyond our strength, or generous beyond our means, or wise beyond the brains with which our poor head is furnished; but, whatever our strength or means or brains, he does ask us to be faithful. He does not ask me to be

another, but just my own plain, humdrum, homely, uninteresting, unimportant, unattractive self, but myself faithful.

Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. What is it to be faithful? It is to be full of trust. The man who has no faith is not faith full but faith empty. He is faithless. It is trusting God down to the end of the journey. It is fidelity. It is being trustworthy as well as trustful. It is trusting God until men can trust me. It is being so loyal to duty, so devoted to truth, so steadfast to principle, that no lure of quick success can tempt me to be faithless. It means that I should rather be defeated than lie, that I should rather fail in business than succeed through dishonesty, that I should rather be broken in fortune and ruined in reputation than compromise my honor. The trouble with so many is that we are spasmodically faithful. Faithfulness unto death is God's standard for human life. On this he bases his judgments.

The divine promise is, I will give thee the crown of life. It is what eternity offers the faithful—a crown of life! What does it mean to be crowned with life by the hand of God yonder in the vast realm of the infinite? Life is the one sufficient equipment for all worlds. If there be life, it will make a way for itself. Christ had life and even the Cross and the Tomb could not block his way. Life will make a way for itself through the mazes of eternity. The faithful will enter the infinite, crowned and kingly. This crown is the sign of a soul's kinship with the royalty of heaven. It is God's way of saying to the faithful: "I am your Father;" and to all the inhabitants of eternity, "This is my Son." Condensed from *Tendency*, by *Dr. James I. Vance.*

The One Thing that Matters. We are going to be through this life before very long. The longest life is short when it is over; any time is short when it is done. The gates of time will swing to behind you before long. They will swing to behind some of us soon, but behind all of us before long. And then the important thing will not be what men thought of us, but what he thought of us, and whether we were built into his kingdom. And if, at the end of it all, we emerge from life's work and discipline crowned souls, at home any where in God's universe, life will be a success. *Professor Borden P. Bowne,* in his last *Public Address.*

How the Chinese think of their Dead. A missionary of the China Inland Mission writes as follows: Every year in the springtime, the Chinese hold the Ch'ing-Ming Feast in honor of the spirits of their departed ancestors. Some of you perhaps have a grandfather or grandmother, or even a mother or father, in heaven. When you think of them there, you know they are perfectly happy and at rest. You like to think of them as being full of joy, because they are in the presence of the Lord Jesus. When the Chinese think of their grandparents or parents who are already dead, they are afraid of them. They think these relatives, now dead, may harm them in some way unless they are kept in good humor by offerings and other attentions.

Not long ago I was out preaching in the country, and amongst those who listened was an old lady about seventy years of age. She said to me: "You Christians don't have paper burned at your funerals, nor do you have the Tao-ist priests perform the 'tso-tsai.'" Tso-tsai is an idolatrous rite, during the performance of which the soul is supposed to be snatched out of hell. "Well," said the old lady, "I intend to have all this; my whole heart is set on it."

Will you pray for that poor old lady, and thousands more like her?

SENTENCE SERMONS

The heroic figure in life's great play is he who is faithful. *Dr. Vance.*

To be faithless is to fail, whatever the apparent success of earth; to be faithful is to succeed, whatever the aparent failure of earth. *Dr Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always. Acts 24.16.

Death is a glorious event to one going to Jesus. *Livingstone.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

It is right to break a promise which it would be wrong to keep.

Fear of man is the end of wisdom, as fear of God is the beginning.

Moral courage, well says Phillips Brooks, is nothing in the world but just the capacity for doing what we know we ought to do. John had great moral courage: Herod had none. Which one do we resemble? Which one are we determined, with God's help, to resemble?

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

As the fame of Jesus spread, various were the conjectures in regard to him. Some said that he was Elijah; others, that he was one of the prophets. When Herod heard about him he said: "The Baptizer is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers work in him. John, whom I beheaded, he is risen."

No wonder the memory of his foul murder haunted Herod! John had boldly told him that it was not lawful for him to have Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and he had yielded to Herodias' demand and had had John imprisoned. Herodias was determined that John should be put to death, but Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man, and kept him safe, even listening gladly to his words, though with much perplexity of mind. Herodias' opportunity came when Herod held a birthday feast. Her daughter Salome danced before the King and his guests, and so pleased them that Herod promised to give her whatever she wished, even unto the half of his kingdom. The girl flew to her mother for counsel. Revenge was sweeter than any gift of jewels or palaces, and she bade the girl ask for the head of John the Baptist. "Straightway with haste" the girl did her mother's bidding. Herod shrank from the demand, but because of his oath and for fear of ridicule and criticism of his guests, he gave the command to a soldier of his guard. The gory head was brought upon a golden dish and given to Salome, and she carried it to her mother. John's disciples came and carried away his body to bury it.

The Baptist had been faithful unto death: he had received God's crown of life. "How good it is that though new chapters go on with our life's story, and people drop out whom we have loved, and incidents change so that it seems quite like another tale, yet the real plot is spiritual and eternal."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Herods.
2. To be weak is in the long run to be wicked.
3. False standards of honor.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. How large a district was Galilee and how many cities there? (Clipping, page 330.) 2. How does it compare in size with your State? 3. When did Jesus visit the Samaritans? (Lk. 9.52; Jn. 4.4.) 4. When did Jesus declare that he had other sheep not of the Jewish fold? (Jn. 10.16.) 5. Look up these references and give their bearing upon verses 5 and 6; Mt. 8.11; 10.18; 21.43; 22.9; 24.14. 6. What was Christ's last commission to his disciples? (Mt. 28.19.) 7. How do we know that the apostles did not suffer when sent out without money? (Lk. 22.35.) 8. To whom, and why, did Peter say, several years after this, "Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money"? (Bible Concordance.) 9. What words of Jesus must Peter have had in mind? (Verse 8.) 10. When did Paul and Barnabas "shake off the dust of their feet" (Acts 13.51.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is meant by the figure of speech in verse 36? 2. What is meant by the figure of speech in verse 37? 3. What did you learn about the twelve disciples in a lesson of last quarter? 4. What led Jesus to send out his disciples? 5. What advantages were there in their going two by two? 6. Was his limitation of their field of work permanent or temporary? Why do you think so? 7. What did you learn in last year's course that explains why the disciples were not to go to the Samaritans? (Clipping, page 332.) 8. What was the "wallet for the journey"? (Clipping, page 332.) 9. What is the meaning of the direction in v. 13? (Clipping, page 331.) 10. What is the meaning of the direction in v. 14? (Clipping, page 332.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

LESSON X—SEPTEMBER 8

THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE

Golden Text

He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. Mt. 10.40

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 10.1-15. The Mission of the Twelve. **T.** Luke 10.1-9. The Seventy Sent Forth. **W.** Isa. 42.1-8. A Missionary Nation. **T.** Isa. 6.1-8. Call and Mission of Isaiah. **F.** Matt. 9.35-38; John 4.34-38. Need of Laborers. **S.** Matt. 10.34-42. Cost and Reward of Discipleship. **S.** 2 Cor. 4.7-18. Faithful to the End. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 9.35-10.15; 10.40-11.1 READ Mark 6.7-12; Luke 9.1-6 COMMIT vv 7, 8

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness. 36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

1 And he called unto him his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the *son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus; 4 Simon the Cananæan, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them, saying, Go not into *any* way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give. 9 Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses: 10 no wallet for *your* journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food. 11 And into whatsoever city or village ye shall enter, search out who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go forth. 12 And as ye enter into the house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth out of that house, or that city, shake off the dust of your feet. 15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

35-38. *Went about.* The Greek word περιῆγεν means literally, *was making a circuit of.*—*All the cities and the villages.* Of Galilee. According to Josephus there were two hundred and four cities and populous villages.—*All manner of.* A truer translation of the Greek πάσας than *every,* AV.—*They were distressed and scattered.* Vexed by needless burdens and uncared for by their professed religious teachers, the scribes and Pharisees.—*The harvest is plenteous.* The multitudes seem like a vast field ready for reaping. *Compare the similar* figure of speech in John 4.35.—*The laborers are few.* See Isa. 6.8.—*Pray ye*

therefore. "Everything vital in the missionary enterprise hinges on prayer" (*Mott*).—*The Lord of the harvest.* My Father is the husbandman, Jn. 15.1.

2-4. *Apostles.* The word is derived from the Greek verb ἀποστέλλειν and means *those sent forth.* Paul's word *ambassadors* (2 Cor. 5.20.) gives the meaning, those who represent the one who sent them.—*The names...are these.* In every list of the apostles the names are given in three groups of four each; each group begins with the same name, but the order of the other three in each varies.—*The first.* He is first named in all the lists.—*Peter...Judas Iscariot.* See Lesson III, Second Quarter.

5-6. *Sent forth.* The verb from which ἀπόστολος, *apostle,* is derived. Two and two, Mk. 6.7. He had bade them pray the Lord to send forth laborers, now he bids them answer their own prayer.—*Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans.* The instructions that follow were adapted to the special needs of the time. See Light from Oriental Life.—*The lost sheep of the house of Israel.* See Mt. 15.24. The Jews were without the true fold, their would-be-shepherds had neglected them (9.36), and they were sadly in need of the true Shepherd.

7-8. *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The proclamation of John the Baptist, Mt. 3.2. See also 4.17; Lk. 10.9—*Raise the dead.* The only record of such a miracle being performed through these apostles is the restoration of Dorcas to life by Peter. Acts 20.9-12 records the restoring to life by Paul of Eutychus.—*Freely.* Gratis, without pay, Compare the expectation of Simon Magus, Acts 8.18-19.

9-10. *Gold, silver, brass.* The coins made of these metals.—*Purses.* "This direction was repeated afterwards, and instructions given of an opposite character, because the Church was to live more and more by ordinary means; but in this journey they were to learn to trust him without means that afterwards they might trust in the means" (*Maclaren*). Greek, *Girdles.* RVm. They carried money in their girdles.—*Wallet.* A bag in which food and other things were carried, Jn. 12.6. See page 332. *Nor shoes nor staff.* Take nothing save a staff only...but shod with sandals, Mk. 6.7, 8. As an old commentator, Euthymius Zigabenus, says, our Lord here enjoins on his disciples "a simple life." This is the thought of both Matthew and Mark, and the fact that each specifies different objects is of no consequence. Possibly shoes were a luxury unknown to ordinary travelers and therefore sandals were ordered in their stead, and perhaps, too, the emphasis in Matthew is upon the word *get,* the disciples were to get no extra staff for the journey, but if they had one they were to take it, as Mark says.—*The laborer is worthy of his food.* See Lk. 10.7; 1 Cor. 9.14; 1 Tim. 5.18. The sustaining of Christ's messengers is not a charity but a debt.

11-13. *Worthy.* In sympathy with the messengers and their message. That he may recognize that he is rather receiving than giving a favor, says Jerome. If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there, said Lydia to Paul, Acts 16.15.—*Salute it.* The common salutation was, Peace be to this house, Lk. 10.5: it was a prayer that the household might be blessed in every respect. Compare also Psa. 122.7, 8.—*Worthy.* Of your abiding therein.—*Let your peace return to you.* Let your salutation be withdrawn, without being effective, as in Isa. 55.11.

14-15. *Shake off the dust of your feet.* A symbolical act, indicating their freedom from all responsibility in regard to the failure of the people to receive their message. See Acts 13.51, and Light from Oriental Life. "It meant certainly 'We have no more to do with you,' and possibly 'Your blood be on your own heads.'" (*Maclaren*).—*Sodom and Gomorrah.* As seen in Mt. 11.22-24; Lk. 10.12; 17.29; Rom. 9.29; 2 Pet. 2.6, and Jude 7, Sodom and Gomorrah are typical instances in the New Testament of the execution of the righteous judgment of God. See Gen. 19.24-29. The verse means that the greater the opportunity for receiving the gospel message, the greater the sin of rejecting it.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

36. *They were scattered as sheep not having a shepherd.* This figure of speech is a striking one. In the East, sheep are not pastured in enclosed fields but

wander about in uninhabited regions and the constant care of a shepherd is needful to keep them from wild beasts and many other dangers.

5. *Enter not into any city of the Samaritans.* Not only was there need of preaching first to the house of Israel, but there was need first of a change in the apostles' attitude toward the Samaritans. See Luke 9.51-56. As we learned in our lessons last year, after the Assyrians conquered Samaria, the Israelite inhabitants were taken to Babylonia, and idolatrous colonists were brought from Babylonia to occupy their place in Samaria. When the exiles returned and began the building of the second temple (lesson for October 22, 1911) the Samaritans wished to join with them in the work, but their offer was refused, and the Samaritans then did all they could to hinder the work. Thus began that hatred between Jew and Samaritan which was most bitter in Christ's day. The Jews regarded the Samaritans as of pure heathen origin, in no way akin to themselves; but the Samaritans claimed that not all the Jews were driven out of Samaria at the captivity, and that through intermarriage there was Jewish blood in their veins. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, which was razed to the ground by John Hyrcanus in the second century before Christ, and this still further increased the enmity between the two peoples. When a Jew would express the utmost hatred of another he called him a Samaritan. "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a demon?" said they to Jesus. For the apostles to carry the Gospel message to the Samaritans at this time would have been wholly useless.

9. *Your purses.* The traveler used a girdle for a twofold purpose: first, to gird his loins, and so keep out of his way the folds of his long flowing robes, which would have hindered his progress; and, second, to carry his money. Gold, silver, and even small coins were habitually carried in the girdle. Devotees never went on a journey without taking with them the book of the law. "Some Levites started one day from Zoar, the city of palms; one of them fell ill on the road, and the rest carried him to an inn. On their return they inquired after their companion. 'He is dead,' replied the hostess; 'and I have buried him.' Then she brought his staff, his wallet, and the book of the law which he had in his hand." *Edmond Stapfer,* in *Palestine in the Time of Christ.*

10. *No wallet for your journey.* The word in the Greek is πήρα, and most commentators think of it as a traveling bag. But there is a special meaning suggested by one of the monuments. This monument was erected in the Roman Imperial period at Kefr-Hauar in Syria by a person who calls himself, in the Greek inscription, a "slave" of the Syrian goddess. "Sent by the lady," as he says himself, this heathen apostle tells of the journeys on which he went begging for the "lady," and boasts triumphantly that "each journey brought in seventy bags." The word here employed is πήρα, and clearly means the beggar's collecting-bag. The same special meaning would make excellent sense in our text; there is to be no earning, and also no begging of money. *Dr. Adolf Deissmann,* in *Light from the Ancient East.*

11. *There abide till ye go forth.* When a stranger arrives in a village or an encampment, the neighbors, one after another, usually invite him to eat with them. There is a strict etiquette about it, involving much ostentation and hypocrisy, and a failure in the due observance of such hospitality is frequently resented, and often leads to alienations and feuds amongst neighbors. *Wm. A. Thomson,* in *The Land and The Book.*

14. *Shake off the dust of your feet.* It was customary for a Jew to wipe the dust from his feet when passing from a heathen land into his own. He who would not receive the apostles was as unworthy as the heathen.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The death of John the Baptist had evidently taken place before the Mission of the Twelve, though recorded after that event. The first disciples had been called by Jesus soon after his baptism and temptation (Lesson IX, First Quarter) and the twelve had been chosen to follow him as his permanent disciples early in his Galilean Ministry (Lesson III, Second Quarter), the Sermon on the Mount being "their ordination address." Now after his third preaching tour in Galilee, Mt. 9.35-38, the popularity of Jesus was at its height, and there was need for more laborers in the field that was white for the harvest. His twelve

disciples had been with him for some time, studying in his school; now they were sent forth to put their knowledge into practice, to learn by doing. They went in pairs, as Mark informs us, therefore in six different circuits, and may have covered Galilee fairly well in a tour of several weeks' duration. The time was early in A. D. 29.

Verses 16-39 contain instructions given to his disciples by Jesus at later times, recorded here by Matthew in accordance with his customary topical arrangement. Luke's record of the charge to the seventy (10.1-16) is very similar to that given the twelve, but their missions were similar and therefore the charges naturally the same.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The "field" of Jesus' labors during his public ministry was very small. His entire time was spent in the Roman districts of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea, save for two brief visits beyond, one to "the region of Tyre and Sidon" or Phœnicia, and another to "the parts of Cæsarea Philippi" and Gaulinitis. The Judean and Samaritan ministries are recorded in the fourth Gospel, the few months of the Perean ministry in the third Gospel, while practically all that is given in Matthew's and Mark's and much of Luke's Gospel is limited to the Galilean ministry.

Galilee is a district twenty-five to thirty-five miles from east to west and fifty miles from north to south, its area of sixteen hundred square miles being between that of the States of Rhode Island and Delaware (Rhode Island 1085 sq. m.; Delaware 1960 sq. m.). Probably Jesus knew "every foot of territory," as we say, in this little region, but the places named in the Gospels, aside from villages, hillsides and desert places, are not numerous—Nazareth, Chorazin, Gadara and Dalmanutha in the Decapolis.

Assign paragraphs 88-91, 118-122. *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Ask your pupils for the names of the twelve disciples, which they learned last quarter. Give them Tissot's picture No. 47, Christ's Exhortation to the Twelve Apostles, or show them Dore's picture of Christ and the Apostles, Soule No. 15060, and refer to it as you talk about the leading disciples. These twelve have been disciples, learners; now they are called apostles, men sent, for Jesus sent them on a journey to do for the people what he himself had been doing. What was that? Where did he send them? Let a pupil point out the boundaries of Galilee on your wall map, then let all refer to the map in their Scrap-books or Quarterlies and point out the cities where Jesus has been in our lesson scenes. Show Tissot's picture of "Jesus passing through the villages," No. 56. Jesus sent the disciples to the people in Galilee because he was sorry for them. Explain the figures of speech in verses 36 and 37, page 335. Do not spend so much time explaining Jesus' instructions to his disciples that you will not have time for the lesson truth that Jesus needed helpers during his ministry on earth and he still needs them. Tell Dr. Meyer's "most interesting missionary story," page 335, Lucy Larcom's poem, page 334, and talk about the missionary work in which your own Sunday-school is interested and the way your pupils are helping with their missionary money.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Have you ever seen a sign in a store window on which was written, "Office-boy wanted"? Did the sign stay there long? Why not? If workers of any sort are needed in store or shop or manufactory of a great city, the call is seldom sent out long before many more applicants than are needed respond. Jesus once sent out a call for workers which has been repeated through the centuries and has not yet had a response sufficient for the work. What was it?

For Older Pupils. In "The High Calling," Dr. J. H. Jowett declares that the measure of our Christian growth may be estimated by the circles of our sympathetic interest. What is the circumference of our outlook? he questions. Are

my sympathies represented by my umbrella, and do they merely cover myself? Or are they something like a garden tent, and do they cover a family? Or are they like a great marquee, and can all the people in the village find shelter beneath its roof? Or still grander and nobler, do they find their symbol in the over-arching firmament, and do they embrace "all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues"? What is the scope of my sympathetic circle? They tell us that the concentric rings in the interior fibre of a tree record its age and the story of its growth. And most sure I am that the concentric rings in the soul-interests of a Christian tell the story of his growth in grace. How large is the circle of our prayers? Are our prayers merely concerned with our own things, or do they reach out to grasp the needs of a race? This was the lesson Jesus sought to teach his disciples one day when he bade them pray—for what?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Freely ye received, freely give

Pass it on. The Greek word which is translated *freely* means *gratis, as a gift.* It is opposed here to *for pay,* not to *stingily.* In giving the apostles this direction, Jesus reminded them that they had not paid for their knowledge of the Kingdom and their power of healing, and accordingly in return they should not ask pay for their services. It was their duty to pass on freely to others what they themselves had freely received.

To an Englishman who was in great financial distress in Paris Benjamin Franklin wrote the following note: I send you herewith ten louis. I am not presenting the sum to you; only lending it. When you return to your country some useful activity cannot fail to put you in a position where you can pay all your debts. And when you meet some one who is embarrassed as you are at present, pay your debt to me by lending the same amount under similar circumstances. In this way the money will go through many hands, before it reaches an evil man who stops its progress. This is my way of doing much good with little means.

This Englishman received freely Franklin's aid, but he was under obligations to pass the amount on as freely. It is always one's duty to make a return to others for whatever gifts one has received freely from God. "'What have we done?' asked the priest and the Levite in astonishment. 'What have we done to be held up for the blame of the centuries in this way? We didn't hurt the poor fellow who had fallen among thieves. Indeed, we really pitied him as we passed by.' 'It is not what you did, but what you did not do,' replied the Master. 'You might have helped him, but you did not.'"

Converts who freely spread the Knowledge of the Gospel of the Kingdom. "How many missionaries have you now on your station?" a bishop once asked a returned missionary. "Three thousand," was the answer. "I did not ask how many converts you have, but how many missionaries," returned the bishop. "I quite understood you, and again I reply, three thousand, for all our converts are missionaries."

The Best Things are shared.

I learned it in the meadow path,
  I learned it on the mountain stairs,
The best things any mortal hath
  Are those which every mortal shares.

And up the radiant peopled way
  That opens into worlds unknown,
It will be life's delight to say,
  "Heaven is not heaven for me alone." *Lucy Larcom.*

II The Starting Point

The Lever that will move the World. You know the saying of Archimedes in regard to the principle of the lever which he had discovered, "Give me a place to stand on, and I shall move the world." Jesus' purpose was to move the world, but he began by giving his disciples short lessons, bidding them

stand first on their own home territory and make disciples of the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Go to thy House, unto thy Friends, and tell them how Great Things the Lord hath done for thee. Dr. F. B. Meyer gives as his "most interesting missionary story" an account of a young factory girl who was led by the preaching of the late Mrs. Booth to surrender her life to the missionary call. Her mother was dead; her father, brother, and sister, for whom she acted as housekeeper, were dissolute and careless. She told her minister of her desire, and he put her off by saying that before she could be a missionary to the heathen she must see that her own people were brought to know God. She admitted the wisdom of this advice, and returned home, resolved that by prayer and faith she would secure life for these with whom she was associated by the ties of nature. Night after night, when they had retired to rest, she knelt down in the poor kitchen, and pleaded with God far into the night that he would save those "who sailed in the ship" with her (Acts 27.24). As a result, at the end of twelve months she returned to her minister, saying that her father, brother, and sister had yielded to the claims of the Lord Jesus, and had become truly converted.

Impressed by such a manifest confirmation of her heart's purpose, the minister took the unusual course of sending her to London to see the C. M. S. Board, explaining the extraordinary circumstances. The girl was unlettered as far as education was concerned, and totally unacquainted with the manners of what is known as polite society; but there was so much artless simplicity and piety in her behavior that she won the goodwill and favor of all whom she met in the great city and on the Missionary Board. So evidently was she called of God, that the directors were obliged to admit her claims, and told her that they would be prepared to send her out, if she was willing to go in a subordinate position. To this she consented, and returned home full of joy.

After some slight training she went out to China, to take some position in the household of the Venerable Archdeacon Moule. A missionary lady, with whom she was to share the cabin, at first demurred at the thought of association with a factory hand, but in a few days she was won by the humility and devotion of her companion, and confessed that the voyage had given her one whom she would ever cherish as a friend.

For some time she performed the duties of her position with assiduous devotion, gave her every spare moment to the acquisition of Chinese as a spoken language, and won the hearts of all the women and children in the mission church and school. Finally she was sent to a station, at some little distance, to do what she might among the people; by faith and prayer she wrought marvellously till she was smitten down by virulent small-pox, and after a few days' illness passed home to God, deeply lamented.

Just where you are. In 1873 came that wonderful Christmas gift to the world—the woman's temperance crusade, beginning in Hillsboro, Ohio, December 23. All through that famous battle winter of home versus saloon, I read every word that I could get about the movement. Meanwhile it occurred to me, strange to say, for the first time, that I ought to work for the good cause just where I was—that everybody ought. Thus I first received "the arrest of thought" concerning which in a thousand different towns I have since then tried to speak, and I believe that in this simple change of personal attitude from passive to aggressive lies the only force that can free this land from the drink habit and the liquor traffic. It would be like dynamite under the saloon if, just where he is, the minister would begin work against it; if, just where he is, the teacher would instruct his pupils; if, just where he is, the voter would dedicate his ballot to this movement, and so on through the shining ranks of the great powers that make for righteousness from father and mother to kindergarten toddler, if each were this day doing what each could, just where he is. *Frances Willard,* in *Glimpses of Fifty Years.*

III Missionary Topic The Ungarnered Harvest

The Field. Jesus directed his disciples to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to them his own ministry was almost wholly limited, (exceptions are his healing of the centurion's servant and the daughter of the

Syrophœnician woman) but before he left he gave his pupils whom he had trained their full commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

And there came a time when one of these pupils, the seer at Patmos, wrote: And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.

All may have a Share in that Glorious Reaping. "To the missionary," writes Dr. Elliott I. Osgood in "Breaking Down Chinese Walls," "there is no greater work than treading in the footsteps of Christ and his disciples in fields where the need is great and the laborers few. To be planted in the midst of a people whose bodies, minds and souls are crying out for the 'Glad Tidings' you have to offer, and to be the only ones in that field who can give it to them—that is opportunity and that is joy."

The Plenteous Harvest in Africa, India, and Japan. In Africa, generally speaking, Mohammedanism is strong in the north, paganism all powerful in the middle, and the south is largely Christian. What a harvest our Master might, and wants to, reap here! But the pity of it, and perhaps I ought to say, the shame of it, is that Africa is becoming Mohammedan more rapidly than it is becoming Christian. And don't let us suppose that Mohammedanism is a religion only a little lower than Christianity. It contains such elements of baseness, has such conceptions of God, of heaven, and of woman, as to make it impossible for us to think of it even as a weak substitute for Christianity.

Let us glance for a moment at India. The vastness of that great country few of us appreciate. The people of India, it is said, are the most deeply religious people on the face of the globe. Yet there are districts in India containing from two to three millions of people without a single Christian worker. And who of us can forbear to speculate on the treasures of the riches in Christ which these people would disclose if, with all their great gifts of mind, of power to see, to penetrate and to comprehend, they were won to the discipleship of Christ?

Look at that part of the harvest-field which we call Japan. There are fifty-two millions of people, and among these are just over eighty thousand Protestant Christians. Japan, having so recently acquired the best of all material things, is still prospecting for the needed substantial moral basis. Many of them are saying that Christianity is the best. For the moment this is how it seems to stand. The three great competitors are Materialism, cold, hard, and comfortless; Agnosticism, negative, unsatisfying, cynical; and Christianity, the religion of light and warmth and love, the religion which guides the steps of poor wayfaring men in life and gives them the reassuring vision of a blessed hope in death; the religion which reveals the true significance of this world by relating it to the eternal Source of Life; the religion which shows us the face of God, and by force of that blessed revelation compels us to say, "Our Father." Condensed from an article in *The Christian World Pulpit,* by *R. Pyke.*

The Harvest Field in China. Here in many cases the fields are literally white for the harvest. We now have cities offering to build and equip hospitals if the church at home will only send physicians; offering to turn over their temples for worship if the church at home will only send the ministers; cities offering to hire halls and pay the rent and help support the preacher if we will only send them ministers. There are almost countless places where the people are willing to contribute at least part of the expense toward maintaining education if people can be sent to teach them Christianity and the Western science. We have one minister at home for every 544 of the population, and one ordained missionary in China for every 219,000 persons. *J. W. Bashford,* in *God's Missionary Plan for the World.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The benefits we receive must be rendered again line for line, cent for cent, deed for deed, to somebody. *Emerson.*

No amount of effort to save the world can make up for failure to sacrifice for the salvation of your own little world. *Henry F. Cope.*

We are all missionaries, the sent ones of the King; and not our fields but our faithfulness matters. *George L. McKay.*

We cannot ask a better leverage from which to move our little fragment of the world towards truth and goodness than the point on which we have been placed. *Henry Wilder Foote.*

The question is not, Will the heathen be lost if they do not hear the Gospel? but, Shall we be saved if we do not take it to them? *Spurgeon.*

Have not some of us been disciples for years without having become apostles yet? *J. E. Jones.*

If we have no desire to see the world discipled, to see men brought back to God, there is something very far wrong in our religion. *D. L. Moody.*

It is the whole duty of the Sunday-school and the duty of the whole Sunday-school to give the whole gospel to the whole world as speedily as possible. *W. N. Hartshorn.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

We have a prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray: we call it the Lord's Prayer. In this chapter there is another "Lord's Prayer," which Jesus taught his disciples, and when he sent them forth to do the work that would answer their own prayer, he taught that prayer and action should be one.

We are all garnering something. Are we laying up only treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, or are we laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven? Are we content with a poor, selfish religion, our only concern being to sow our own field with wheat and not tares? Or have we heeded the call to help God in his world-wide harvest-field?

Heavenly Father, to us, as long ago to the twelve apostles, comes the call for service. Especially in our own land, in our own school and home and business, are the opportunities many; may we not fail to use them. Our lot has fallen in pleasant places; our comforts and pleasures and joys are many; we owe them all to thee; as freely as we have received may we give.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The minister and his salary. On the one hand the laborer is worthy of his food: on the other, in the words of Dr. Maclaren, If ever a herald of Christ falls under suspicion of caring more about life's comforts than about his work, good-bye to his usefulness.

2. Thanksgiving: that we live in this glorious crisis day of the world's history; that we are entrusted with things not easy to do; that God does not exclude us from present privilege because of past negligence; that we have his promise for "all sufficiency in all things." Penitence: for unbelief, selfishness, and lack of sympathy with missionaries and fellow Christian workers; for racial antipathies that prevent loving our neighbors as ourselves. *Jubilee of Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What does "upbraid" mean? 2. What was sackcloth? (Clipping, page 340.) 3. Locate the cities mentioned in the lesson. (Clipping, page 341.) 4. What record have we of Jesus' "mighty works" at Bethsaida? (Subject-Index of Bible.) 5. Capernaum? 6. Chorazin? 7. What is known about the people of Sodom? (Gen. 19.) 8. Where in the Bible is "the rest verse" found?

Questions to think about. 1. Make an analysis of the 11th chapter of Matthew. 2. Which was the more wicked city, Sodom or Capernaum? 3. Why would it be more tolerable for the people of Sodom in the Judgment than for those of Capernaum? 4. What city repented in sackcloth and ashes, as we learned in a lesson of last year? (Jonah 3.) 5. What lesson is there for us in verses 20-24? 6. To whom does the Son will to reveal the Father? 7. What Old Testament king did the people ask to make their yoke lighter and what was his reply, as we learned in a lesson of last year? (1 K. 12.1-16.) 8. How does Jesus give rest? (Clipping, page 339.)

Note Book and Memory Work. Continue your writing. Commit to memory verses 25-30.

LESSON XI—SEPTEMBER 15

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

Golden Text

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Mt. 11.28

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 11.20-30. Judgment and Mercy. **T.** Isa. 5.1-7. Neglected Opportunities. **W.** Rom. 2.1-16. Basis of Divine Judgment. **T.** Ezek. 33.7-16. God's Righteous Judgments. **F.** Matt. 25. 14-30. Faithfulness Rewarded. **S.** 2 Thess. 1.1-10. The Righteous Judge. **S.** 2 Pet. 3.8-18. Judgment an Incentive to Steadfastness. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 11.20-30 READ Luke 10.12-22 COMMIT vv 28, 30

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works
were done, because they repented not. 21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto
thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon
which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and
ashes. 22 But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon
in the day of judgment, than for you. 23 And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be
exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works
had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until
this day. 24 But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of
Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.
25 At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of
heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and under-
standing, and didst reveal them unto babes: 26 yea, Father, for so it was well-
pleasing in thy sight. 27 All things have been delivered unto me of my Fa-
ther: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the
Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *him.*
28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you
rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly
in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and
my burden is light.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

20. *Then.* See the Historical Background.—*He.* Jesus.—*Upbraid.* Reproach severely.—*The cities.* See vv. 21 and 23.—*Mighty works.* Miracles. Greek, *powers,* RVm.

21-22. *Chorazin! Bethsaida!* We have no record of mighty works done at Chorazin and only one record of a mighty work at Bethsaida, that of feeding the five thousand: how fragmentary is our knowledge of Christ's ministry!—*Tyre and Sidon.* These cities are singled out, no doubt, because they were famed for their worship of Baal and their wickedness.—*In sackcloth and ashes.* As did the inhabitants of Nineveh under Jonah's preaching, Jonah 3.5-10. See Light from Oriental Life. With verse 22 compare Mt. 10.15; 11.24.

23. *Shalt thou be exalted unto heaven?* Compare the case of Babylon, Isa. 14.13-15.—*Go down.* Many ancient authorities read *be brought down,* RVm.—*Hades.* The Greek word ᾅδης (Heb. *Sheol*) means literally "the unseen world," the abode of the departed, both the good and the bad. It is thought of as underground, hence the verb *go down.*—*Sodom.* Still more notoriously wicked than Tyre and Sidon. Its destruction is narrated in Gen. 19.

25-26. *At that season.* At the same general period of time as indicated by *then,* v. 20. In that same hour, Lk. 10.21.—*Answered.* "By a peculiar Hebrew

idiom this word is often used in the Scriptures where there is no previous question, nor even anything that has been said by another. It is in response to, or as suggested by, the sad truths just uttered (vv. 16-19, 20-24), that Jesus states the comforting thoughts which follow" (*Broadus*).—*Thank.* Or, *praise,* RVm.—*These things.* The things taught by Jesus.—*The wise and understanding.* Jesus is thankful that the scribes and Pharisees have not understood or have rejected his teaching, for they were too wise in their own eyes to become his disciples.—*Babes.* The unlearned, who with a true, child-like spirit accepted his teachings. Compare 1 Cor. 1.26-29.—*For.* Or, *that,* RVm.

25-30. "As a rule in the Synoptics the relation of Jesus to mankind is the theme of the discourses, but here the divine sonship of Jesus is affirmed in terms which cover the whole doctrine of the fourth Gospel" (*Dummelow*).

27. *All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father.* See Mt. 28.18; Jn. 3.35; 13.3; 17.2. "*All things* refer, not to cosmical power, but to religious knowledge and insight. In the previous utterance Jesus affirms this knowledge had come to him in virtue of his own Sonship. He was conscious that he stood to God in an altogether unique relation, which enabled him at once to understand God's will and to interpret it to others" (*Earnest F. Scott,* in *Biblical World*).—*Knoweth.* Fully knoweth.—*Willeth to reveal him. Will reveal,* AV, now a simple future, originally expressed this idea of willing. "If this statement stood alone, as it does in Luke, it might fill the soul with apprehension. For it seems to imply that if we know not the Father, it is because the Son has not wished to reveal him to us. But in verse 28 all doubt is removed; for the statement of Christ's exclusive knowledge is followed at once by his universal invitation" (*Horton*).

28. *I will give you rest.* They (the scribes and Pharisees) bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger, Mt. 23.4. Jesus gives rest to the toiling and burdened by giving them power to endure the toil and bear the burden. He gives not rest from toil and burdens but rest in toil and burdens.

29. *Take my yoke upon you.* A figure of speech meaning *become my disciples,* pupils. This is the condition by fulfilling which one finds rest. "The yoke is used symbolically in the Old Testament to denote a condition of servitude (Lev. 24.13): and hence, in the New Testament, of bondage under the law as opposed to the freedom of the Gospel (Acts 15.15; Gal. 5.1; 1 Tim. 6.1). Only here is it used of allegiance to Christ" (*Abbott*).—*I am meek and lowly in heart.* Not arrogant and harsh like the Pharisees.—*Ye shall find rest unto your souls.* A quotation from Jer. 6.16.

30. *My yoke is easy.* "The yoke which he himself wore, one end on his neck and the other on his disciples." (*Smith*). "It is lined with love" (*Henry*). "The yoke of Christ is like the plumage of a bird, which adds to its weight, but enables it to soar to the sky" (*St. Augustine*).—"The whole passage is a most eloquent commentary on Jesus' own idea of the Messiah in opposition to the popular expectation" (*Holtzmann*).

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *Woe unto thee.* Would inquiry show that the race of which he was a Child was more wicked than the other races of the human species, and that the age in which he lived was worse than those that had preceded or that have come after it? or are these the stock complaints of every prophet in every age? A very short time after he left the earth, and before his century ended, the nation of the Jews was turned inside out and its seamy side exposed to the eyes of history. In the annals of mankind there have been few such testing experiences as the siege of Jerusalem in the year 70 of the Christian era; and never has all which such a test has revealed of that which is in man been more mercilessly put on paper than in *The Jewish War* of Josephus. Perhaps its author is not altogether to be trusted, because he was a turncoat, but he alleges that such was the iniquity of the Holy City before it was besieged by Titus that, had it not been destroyed by the Romans, the earth must have opened to swallow it up; and, in spite of the pity extorted by his narrative, the impression produced by it as a whole is one of such demoniac passion and violence that

the reader acquiesces in the judgment of Providence by which such a nest of iniquity was removed from the earth.

When the best is corrupted, says the proverb, it becomes the worst; and this principle may be the explanation of the degeneration of Israel. There is no sin so guilty as sin against light; and Israel had enjoyed divine light beyond all the nations of the ancient world. The results had not, however, been such as the Giver of the light was entitled to expect. Age after age those sent by him to enlighten their fellow-countrymen had been despised and rejected. Jerusalem was the city which slew the prophets. The Jews were like husbandmen left in charge of a vineyard who, when the owner at the vintage sent to ask for his own, beat one messenger and stoned another, and were only acting in character when at last they slew his Son. *Dr. James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

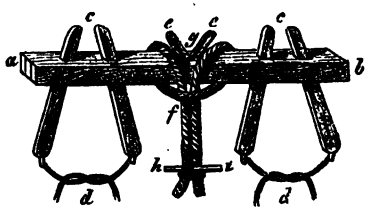
29. *For I am meek and lowly.* Meekness, patience, forbearance, silence,—these are not the signs of mere self-mortification, they are the signs of power in reserve. They are the marks of one who can afford to wait, who expects to suffer, who need not contend; and all this, not because he is simply meek and lowly, but because he is also strong and calm. *Professor Francis G. Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and Christian Character.*

27. *To whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.* If men are to be Christians they must make Christ their interpreter both of God and of man. They must see God in Christ; for, when it comes to the point, what do they know of God save through Jesus Christ? No doubt they have the revelation that came through Moses and through the prophets, through Mohammed and Buddha and the great religions of the East. There is very much to be learned about man's thought of God from all these sources, and in all these ways it is good to learn. But, after all, there is no word, there or anywhere, so direct, so absolute, so final as the word that came in the fullness of the times through his Son. *W. B. Selbie,* in *Aspects of Christ.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *They would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.* I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, said Job. In the East, sackcloth and ashes were considered symbolical of sorrow and despair. The sackcloth was a rough cloth woven from the short hair of camels or cattle, and was worn usually next to the skin so as to irritate it. Ashes were put on the mourner's head, or he sat in them, 2 Sam. 13.19; Job 2.8.

30. *My yoke is easy.* The oriental yoke is a clumsy affair that galls the shoulders and strains the neck of the ox. Orientals use the word figuratively for a rule of conduct. The rabbis imposed burdensome rules on the people, made the yoke grievous for them to bear.



A Modern Syrian Yoke.

30. *My burden is light.* Because many streets in the East are too narrow and winding for wagons, huge packages are carried by human burden-bearers. In "Palestine Explored," James Neil says: "I have often gazed at these poor fellows with mingled wonder and pity as I have seen them staggering past me along the broken and slippery stone paths of the streets of Jerusalem, bowed down under burdens so huge in bulk and so heavy in weight as to seem altogether beyond human strength. Were not the physical powers of these Syrian peasants developed in a very remarkable degree they could not engage all day long in such work. In the prophets the "burden" is used as a most expressive metaphor to set forth the denunciation of heavy judgments. Our Lord, too, has a plain reference to the toil of the *atal* or porter."

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

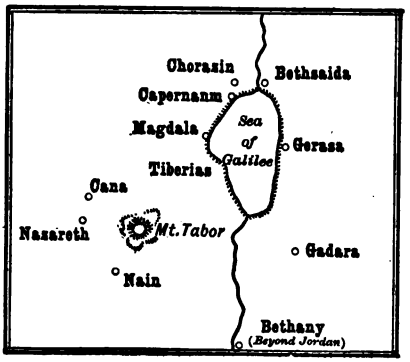
In a lesson of last Quarter we heard about the unreasonable people who found fault both with John the Baptist and with Jesus, with the former for his as-

ceticism and with the latter for his lack of it, and Jesus' charge against them as being like unto children who were willing neither to play at a wedding nor weep at a funeral. Matthew follows this very naturally with Jesus' "woe" upon these people who had been so favored by his presence and work and yet were unrepentant. This 11th chapter of Matthew while not chronological is most logical: it records the way in which four classes of people received the message of Jesus: John the Baptist, his forerunner, misunderstood it; the scribes and Pharisees perverted it; the cities rejected it; the "babes" received it.

Luke records the words of our lesson in connection with the sending forth of the seventy, but as some one has forcibly said, chapters 10-18 of Luke's Gospel present to our gaze something like a Milky Way, densely crowded with clustering gems, radiant with evangelical truth and grace, but marshalled withal in somewhat bewildering fashion. There is here no attempt at historic sequence.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum have been so utterly destroyed, "gone down into Hades," that their exact location is in dispute. Ruins and rubbish indicate two sites near the northern end of the Sea of Galilee, modern Tell-Hum and Khan-Minyeh, as the site of Capernaum. Jerome tells us that Chorazin was two Roman miles distant from Capernaum: broken columns, stones and marble slabs at Kerasch north of Capernaum are thought to mark its site. Bethsaida was near the mouth of the Jordan. It is thought by some scholars that there were two Bethsaidas, Bethsaida of Galilee on the western shore and Bethsaida Julias on the eastern, while others think that there was but one city, built on both sides of the river Jordan.



Tyre and Sidon were great commercial cities on the coast of Phœnicia. Sodom has been located in the Jordan Valley somewhere in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea.

Assign paragraphs 115, 152-155, 123-129, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

We are often astonished at the spiritual capacity of children, at their deep thoughts, their clear experience of the things of God, remarks Dr. Watkinson. As Paul wrote to Timothy, From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures—known them, known their saving power. Little children cannot understand theology, but they can "enjoy religion." They do not understand entomology, yet they admire a butterfly; they know little of botany, yet they love a daisy.

A great sculptor wanted to make a statue of Jesus which would show him as he looked when he urged the people to come to him. When his statue was finished he showed it to a little girl and asked her who it was. "Some great man," she said, and the sculptor knew he had failed, for he wanted the statue to show more than that Jesus was great. He tried again, and then called in the little girl to see it. "Oh," she said at once, "it is suffer little children to come unto me," and then the sculptor knew that the statue told what he wished. As you tell this to your pupils give them pictures of this statue, Thorwaldsen's Christ, or Plockhorst's "Consoling Christ, Perry No. 813 or Brown No. 820. Jesus often urged the people to come to him and learn of him. What twelve men obeyed him? There were three cities in Galilee where Jesus often taught the people and asked them to come to him, but many of them never would. They were on or near that lake where Jesus calmed the storm. What was it? What was the name of the city where he went very often? Let a pupil point out Capernaum on the map. Then briefly give the thought of verses 20-24, that the people who lived in Capernaum and in the two cities north of it who had

been so favored by having Jesus with them often and yet had not received him gladly were worse than those who lived in cities like Tyre and Sidon where Jesus had never been.

There were others who listened to Jesus gladly. He called them "babes," meaning those who were teachable. Tell the story of Po Too, page 344. Call for the Golden Text and explain it. Over in China and Japan men fly kites just as boys do here. These men think that in this way they can send trouble away, for when the kite is far up they cut the string and let the kite float away, believing that it will carry with it whatever is troubling them. What a foolish notion! What did Jesus say to do when in trouble? Recall his words to little children, which the little girl knew who looked at Thorwaldsen's statue. I am meek and lowly in heart, Jesus said. That means, explains Dr. C. C. Hall, that there is nothing in him which makes it impossible for you to bring your lives, your hopes, your cares to him; he cares about all these things; they are not small things to him; he who is meek and lowly in heart cares for everything that happens to you. Show Hofmann's "Come unto me," Union Press, No. 60.

Give pupils copy of the two stanzas on page 351 for next week's lesson.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What do you know about Sodom? Not ten righteous men could be found there: could that have been said of Capernaum? Yet what did Jesus say about the two cities in the day of judgment? Why? In what other cities had many of Jesus' mighty works been done? What did Jesus say of these two cities? Why? (Tell the story of the girl with the sprained ankle, page 343, and lead your pupils to make the deduction that the clearer our light, the greater our guilt if we do not live up to it.)

For Older Pupils. What is a pessimist? Was Jesus a pessimist? Did he ever despair of establishing his kingdom? Did he ever despair of saving individual men? What events and words can you recall which show him as a wonderful optimist? (See page 274.) Last week we saw him intent upon reaping a ready harvest, and confident that the twelve apostles would find people enough who would welcome them and supply all their needs. To-day we hear Jesus bewailing the fate of three great cities, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. Had these cities rejected Jesus as Nazareth had done? Had he shaken off the dust of his feet against them? We have no such record. They had not rejected him, they were simply indifferent to him, too taken up with their material prosperity to listen attentively to his message and repent. Theirs was thorny ground, the good seed was choked, and Jesus knowing this wept as it were over their sure fate, even as he afterwards wept over the fate of Jerusalem.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Failure of the Favored

The Better thou understandest the more strictly shalt thou be judged. The people of ancient Sodom were so wicked that not ten righteous men could be found there. The people of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum could rightly say that they were not such sinners as those of Sodom. Why, then, should it be more tolerable for the Sodomites in the day of judgment than for those dwellers by the Sea of Galilee? Because Jesus the Christ had lived and worked among them; they had followed him in crowds through motives of curiosity, they had marvelled at his mighty deeds, and then had gone back to become absorbed in their affairs, unrepentant, unconcerned about the supreme question, their own membership in the Kingdom of God. The light had come to them and they had rejected it. To sin against light is far worse than to sin against darkness. There is a solemn warning here for us. "The clearer our light, the greater our duty," said Henry Ward Beecher. "For us to fall into the pit in which they of old stumbled is thrice a crime, as compared with the criminality of those who in the primitive ages walked by doubtful light and with uncertain guidance." In the words of Thomas à Kempis, The more thou

knowest, and the better thou understandest, the more strictly shalt thou be judged, unless thy life be also the more holy.

How God Judges. To know a man is not to know the sin he has fallen into, but the amount of resistance to temptation that lay behind it. It may be a sin which you would never do by reason of the whole course of your habits and upbringing. But he may have been from his birth on the very edge of that pit. One slight stumble such as you make every hour of the day would land him there—and he has sinned, and you know the sin and name it and classify him by it. He is the sinner and you the righteous, standing upon firm, high ground and judging him in his miserable place. Yet he may not have sinned so much as you did half an hour ago. It all depends upon how far a man has to go to reach the edge. *John Kelman.*

A Comparison. A young girl who had sprained her ankle and could not leave her room, lay upon her lounge. The thought of the long, empty, possibly painful day before her, for the moment filled her with anger at the "luck," as she called it, that had sent this accident, just as the ignorant heathen whom she was putting aside money to convert might beat his wooden fetish when his head ached.

In the afternoon the doctor's wife came to call upon her. She listened absently while the visitor talked, and when she had gone the girl's face beamed with content. "I thought I should have a long, dreary day," she said to her father in the evening, "but Mrs. Bishop was here, and do you know, that fine New York gown of hers is half cotton? Oh, I know something!" She ate her supper and slept contentedly. Her heathen brother on the other side of the world gnawed his bone, regarded his bead collar with complacency, and when night came slept also.

Like this young girl, we, who are living surrounded by religious associations and influences, have descended from generations of Christians. What difference at heart have our centuries of advantage given us over our heathen brother? *Youth's Companion.*

II Revealed unto Babes

The Wise and the Babes. The world is divided into the wise and the simple, and Jesus rejoices that worldly wisdom and trained understanding are not needed in order to grasp the things of God, that from the larger division of the simple-minded and pure-hearted God has not hidden the truths of the kingdom. In that Kingdom there is no aristocracy of the intellect, but a democracy of experience. The wise and understanding who will not accept God until they understand him may be compared to the man who is unwilling to mount a bicycle until he can understand how it moves and balances, and spends his time trying to solve the problems of higher dynamics instead of setting himself to the task of learning to ride and proving by experience that a bicycle can be readily balanced and easily moved.

The truth of Jesus' words Henry Ward Beecher acknowledges. It is true, he says, that there are many philosophers and many theologians who have a conception of God which is unspeakably inferior to that which is found by the very ignorant and poor and miserable people. I have talked with an old colored man who, storm-driven, had gone to God, because he had nowhere else to go, and who had a richness and wonderfulness of experience that I had no parallel to in myself, though I was a preacher, and my business was to study. A God that you have studied out can never be such a God as you have felt out. Our knowledge of God does not depend upon our education, nor upon our philosophical capacities, but upon our inward and spiritual lives.

The same sort of testimony comes from the pen of Mr. S. D. Gordon:—I have sometimes sought the meaning of some passage from a keen scholar who could explain the orientalisms, the fine philological distinctions, the most accurate translations, and all of that, who yet did not seem to know the simple spiritual meaning of the words being discussed. And I have asked the same question of some old saint of God, who did not know Hebrew from hen's tracks, but who seemed to "sense" at once the deep spiritual truth taught. The more knowledge, the keener the mind, the better, if illumined by the Spirit that inspired these writings.

Why many Wise and Understanding fail to know God. In California in

the old days, deep-level gold-mining was the fashion; it seemed reasonable to suppose that the gold must lie deep, and be difficult to acquire; yet, in the end, deep-level mining proved an expensive failure. A more careful exploration nearer the surface was then tried, and in almost every instance bodies of ore were found that had been overlooked in the eagerness to penetrate to unknown depths—the searchers missed the gold by getting below it. It is easy to fall into a similar mistake in our treatment of Holy Scripture. Here, too, the gold lies near the surface. The sensibility of sincerity secures the wayfaring men light, peace, and hope; whilst the acute, unsympathetic critic digs deep only to dig himself a grave. The British and Foreign Bible Society distributing the holy book without note and comment is amply justified by our Lord's words. Painstaking criticism and scholarly exegesis are in many ways helpful, yet the truth which saves is independent of both.

Let the intellectual sink shafts of logic, research and mysticism as deep as they may, it is a necessity of reason that they should; yet the truths by which men live are on the surface, delightfully intelligible at a glance to the simple-hearted, the whole-hearted. *Condensed from Frugality in the Spiritual Life,* by *W. L. Watkinson.*

The Miller's Reasoning. The squire did not approve of the miller's being a local preacher, for he was an unlearned man with few advantages. He took him to task one day for assuming to lead others, and the miller enlightened him, according to *The Sunday Magazine.*

"John, I don't like the idea of your going about preaching. A man should be especially fitted for the ministry; he should have the university training necessary for the preacher who would guide others," persisted the squire.

The miller looked at the wall above the squire's desk, for they were in the squire's library. "Is that the map of your estate, sir?" said he. The squire assented.

"I s'pose you do know that map purty well, don't 'ee? Every road, and every pathway, and every waterway?" "Yes, yes."

"Well, squire, do you remember the other day you wus down to the mill and you asked my li'l Mary to show you the pathway through the woods? I've been thinkin' 'tis like this 'ere. You knowed that road 'pon the map. If you'd ask li'l Mary what a was called—'pon the map, mind—she wouldn't 'ave been able to tell 'ee. But li'l Mary showed you the way up through the woods. You knowed the way, 'pon the map, but li'l Mary knowed the way by walkin' in et; and I don't know the way 'pon the map so well as some people; but, bless the Lord! I do know the way to heaven by walkin' in et."

A Missionary's Testimony. There is a peculiar fascination for me in the life of my singular brother, Po Too, who was called higher in 1893. This man had absolutely nothing save the spirit of Christ. His face was plain, and manner naturally unprepossessing to excess. His mental equipment, either natural or acquired, was of the slenderest kind; so much so that he was regarded as removed from feeble-mindedness by but a hair's breadth, if removed at all. Of worldly goods he had none; nor had he wife or home. A Sgaw Karen by birth, the condition of the vast mass of Pwo heathen rested heavily upon his heart. He spent three years in the Pwo school in Bassein in order to acquire the Pwo dialect, and especially to learn how to read the Pwo Bible and hymn book, after which he gave the fifteen years that he had yet to live to continuous work among the heathen Pwos.

Everything within him was consecrated to his Master, and by hard work he accomplished results. There was a simplicity of mystery, or a mysterious simplicity, about him that witnessed of communion with another world. He was not demonstrative, and there was no hurrah, not the faintest echo of noise in his work. He seemed rather a devoted and accepted channel of divine influence in its simpler forms, those especially adapted to the lowly class among whom he worked. He always chose raw heathen communities, and while he preached, started a little school of the rudest pattern. As soon as a few converts had been made he left the field to others, and moved on to some other village in which Christian work had not been carried on. His course was steadily to the "regions beyond." In this way he became widely known in various parts of our field and several of our churches owe their formation chiefly to him.

III The Great Invitation

Come, Take, Learn, Find. The conditions are clear and simple, come, take, learn; and the blessing meets the universal need, Ye shall find rest unto your souls, I will give you rest. Come unto me, fellowship with me, all you that are restless, dissatisfied, burdened, for I have the power to supply your deepest need, I will give you rest, not freedom from labor but rest in labor, not ease but content. How does Jesus give that rest? He tells us the secret of his ability in the verse which precedes his wondrous promise. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come to me, Jesus says, and I will make known to you the Father, and you shall be kept in perfect peace because your mind is stayed on him. Direct, personal relationship with the Father brings peace.

An "Office for Psychic Treatment" has just been opened in Berlin whose directors offer to cure "spiritual and intellectual doubt, inclinations to crime and violence, melancholias, concerns of conscience, pessimisms, hatreds, family difficulties, discouragements" and kindred troubles with which weary humanity labor and are heavy laden. Human advice and suggestion may prove helpful, but the only cure is found by accepting the great invitation of him who has the power to give rest unto souls.

A number of artists were once discussing how one could most quickly recover strength after a period of great exertion. Various methods were suggested, and then Haydn reverently said: "In my home I have a small chapel. When I feel wearied because of my work, I go there and pray. This remedy has never failed me."

"And I smile to think God's greatness flows around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness, his rest."

Take my yoke upon you ,and learn of me. A correspondent of the *Sunday School Times* was driving up a hill of Kentucky with a mountain boy who had begged a ride. They came to a turn in the road where they saw a man and two boys hauling stones on a sledge, one of the peculiar kind found only in the mountains of Kentucky. Their team consisted of a large ox, with which was yoked a yearling calf. The yoking was so arranged that the ox pulled the load and the calf walked by his side, and occasionally threw a little weight on his small yoke bow. The writer gives the conversation that followed.

"Is that the way you do up here in the mountains," I asked, "make a calf do as much as an ox?"

"Yer don't seem to know much about oxen, mister; that air calf is larnen how to wear his yoke and how to go, so he can do work when he gits big."

"Ah! I see; teaching him to bear his yoke in his youth. That is the time to learn easiest and best, is it?" He looked up at me, but made no reply.

"How would you like to be yoked up that way?" "Dunno," he said.

"How would you like to be yoked up to me?" He eyed me from head to foot, a faint smile crept over his face, as he replied, "Wouldn't mind it, sar; yer big enough to pull the load." "Would you let me pull all the load?" He dropped his head, but said nothing.

"That seems to be a good, steady old ox," I said.

"Yep," he replied, "that be old man G—'s ox. He's the bestest ox in these yer parts. Mos' every young steer gits a turn with him."

"Why?" I asked. "'Cause he knows how to go and to pull." "It is better, then, to be yoked to a good ox than a bad one, is it?" "Sartin," he replied.

We were coming to the end of our drive; he had indicated to me the exact point where he must turn off. "Did you ever hear these words: 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light'?" I asked.

He had never heard them. I told him who had uttered them, where they were to be found, and what they meant. How anxious he was to have every boy yoked with him,—what it would mean to him, not only in this life, but in the life to come. I told him about the yoke of Satan, and how it galled the necks of all who wore it. I never had a more interested listener; his large

brown eyes opened up at me as I told him of the yoke-bearing Saviour. He was loath to leave me when we came to the place of parting. He stood in the path over which he was to go and looked after me until I had driven out of sight. I put up a silent prayer that the seed I had tried to sow might not be lost.

Ye shall find Rest unto your Souls. There are two kinds of rest. I have stood by the doctor's side when he chloroformed a patient, and I have seen the strained and nervous body relax as the mind lost its grip on its surroundings. That is one kind of rest or relief, the rest of sleep and forgetfulness. I have also seen a tired workman revived, not by sleep, but by food, refreshment. That too is rest. And this is the rest that Christ promises—not idleness, sleep, dreams, but refreshment, new vigor and life, and eagerness to accomplish worthy tasks. Is life wearisome? Are you blue? Take Christ's yoke of service upon you and go out to help your suffering brothers and you will find rest unto your souls. *R. P. Anderson.*

My Yoke is Easy, and my Burden is Light. "St. Augustine has a beautiful illustration of the paradox. How, asks he, can a burden be light? And he answers: Look at the eagle! what mighty pinions has nature affixed to his shoulders! they must be heavy! To any other bearer, at least, they would be an intolerable obstacle and embarrassment. But, fixed where they have been placed by nature, they raise the royal bird and carry it up into the eye of the sun. And so does Christ's burden; because duty becomes nature when it is inspired by love."

Her Easy Chair. A woman in humble circumstances, the mother of four children, was suddenly bereft of her husband. She took up her burden with calmness and patience, toiling early and late that her children might obtain an education. A friend said to her one day, "Do you never get tired or discouraged?" "Oh, yes!" was the reply, "but when I think I can go no farther, or do no more, I go and rest in my easy chair." "Easy chair?" questioned her friend, looking around the bare room. "Yes; would you like to see it? Come with me." She led her into a small, scantily furnished bedroom, and, taking her by the hand, knelt by the bedside, and the toil-worn, burdened woman prayed as if she were face to face with God. Rising, she said: "Now Ifeel rested and am ready for work again. Prayer is my easy chair." There is no life so bare or destitute that it cannot have the easy chair of prayer. *Record of Christian Work.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee. *St. Augustine.*

In the doing of his will lies our peace. *Dante.*

When the learned are fumbling to find the latch, the simple and poor have entered into the Kingdom of heaven. *St. Augustine.*

He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Jn. 6.37.

They who are likest him that was meek and lowly in heart are surest to possess the unflinching resolve which set his face like a flint and enabled him to go unhesitatingly and unrecalcitrant to the Cross itself. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

Christ's life was outwardly one of the most troubled lives that was ever lived; tempest and tumult, tumult and tempest, the waves breaking over it all the time, till the worn body was laid in the grave; but the inner life was a sea of glass; the great calm was always there; at any moment you might have gone to him and found rest. *Henry Drummond.*

May God help us all, every day of our lives, to come to Christ just as we are, that he may make us more and more just what we ought to be. *Phillips Brooks.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

In Bishop Phillips Brooks' words: The summons of Christ to anxious humanity is not a memory of something which happened years ago; it is something which is actually happening now, to-day. That involves and rests upon the facts

that man is the same being that he was in the Gospel days and that Christ still lives. Jesus is here! and men in sorrow look at a present Christ and are comforted. Glad men look up and are perfectly sure that he rejoices in their gladness. Perplexed men get light from him upon their problems. Wicked men get first rebuke, and then forgiveness, and then the power of a new life from Christ. He says to you, "Come unto me." May his voice so prevail with you that you shall come to him!

Come to me is the first step; learn of me, the second. Some there are who rest content with having once upon a time made the approach.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

The people in the cities where Jesus had wrought most of his mighty works—Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum—did not accept him as the Christ. Because they repented not, he rebuked them severely, declaring that if Tyre and Sidon had witnessed such proof of his power they would have repented in deepest sorrow, and even Sodom would not have perished because of its wickedness had its people been so privileged. Did the people of Capernaum expect to be exalted to heaven? They should be cast down into Hades. At the day of judgment it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon and Sodom than for these inhabitants of Galilee.

Then Jesus turned his thoughts in gratitude to those who had received his message, thanking his heavenly Father for having made his revelation, not to those who thought themselves wise and prudent, but to those who were childlike in their teachableness. Jesus himself is the Teacher, known fully only to the Father, and the only One who can give true knowledge of the Father, he declared, and then he invited all to come and learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, promising to give to those that labored and were heavy laden rest unto their souls, and assuring them that those who joined themselves to him would find his yoke easy, his burden light.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Sins of American cities. See "Policing our Lawless Cities," *Hampton's*, Sept., 1909.
2. The disappointed Christ.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. In how many of the Gospels is this miracle recorded? (See the references given for the whole lesson, at the head of the lesson text in your quarterlies.) 2. What is the first instance of miraculously supplied food recorded in the Bible? (Ex. 16.11-18.) 3. What other miraculous supplies of food are mentioned in the Bible? (1 K. 17.2-6; 8-16; 19.4-8; Mk. 8.1-9; Jn. 21.4-13.) 4. What was the occasion that the disciples were reporting to Jesus? (Lesson two weeks ago.) 5. What and where was the "desert place"? (Clipping, page 351.) 6. What does the word *compassion* mean? (Dictionary.) 7. What is the value of two hundred shillings? (See footnote of Revised Version.) 8. What was the common food of the poor people? (Cliping, page 350.) 9. What did Jesus say about himself as the Bread of life? (Jn. 6.22-65.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why does Mark call the twelve disciples, *Apostles?* (Clipping, page 331.) 2. How were the disciples disturbed by the crowd? (Their rest and communion with their Master was interrupted.) 3. When had Jesus hungered? 4. Why did he then refuse to create bread for himself? 5. If he would not satisfy his own hunger by a miracle, why did he that of the multitude? 6. When was food miraculously multiplied by an Old Testament prophet. (See one of our lessons last year?) 7. What does our Golden Text mean?

Note Book Work. Continue your writing. See page 17.

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

Golden Text

Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. John 6.35

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 6.30-44. The Feeding of the Five Thousand. **T.** Matt. 15.32-39. Feeding of Four Thousand. **W.** Ex. 16.4-15. Bread from Heaven. **T.** 1 Kings 17.8-16. The Widow's Meal and Oil. **F.** Ps. 34.1-10. The Lord a Provider. **S.** John 6.32-40. True Bread from Heaven. **S.** Matt. 26.20-30. The Lord's Supper. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 6.30-44 READ Mt. 14.13-21; Luke 9.12-17; John 6.1-13 COMMIT vv 41, 42

30 And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. 31 And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. 32 And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart. 33 And *the people* saw them going, and many knew *them,* and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outwent them. 34 And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. 35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent; 36 send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. 37 But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings worth of bread, and give them to eat? 38 And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go *and* see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. 39 And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass. 40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. 41 And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. 42 And they all ate, and were filled. 43 And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes. 44 And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

30-32. *The apostles.* The disciples had just returned from their apostolic work (Mk. 6.7-13), and Mark now calls them *apostles* for the first and only time.—*And they told him all things.* Which had occurred on their preaching and healing tour, our lesson two weeks ago.—*To a desert place.* The Greek ἔρημον means a place where there are few people, and is better translated *lonely* in the Twentieth Century New Testament.—*Rest awhile.* Matthew gives the death of John the Baptist as the reason for the withdrawal across the lake, Mt. 14.13.—*There were many coming and going.* The Passover was nigh, Jn. 6.4.—*They had no leisure so much as to eat.* He knew their frame, he remembered that they were dust, Ps. 103.14.

33-36. *On foot.* Or, *by land.* RVm.—*Outwent them.* Reached the place ahead of them.—*He came forth.* From the boat.—*The day was far spent.* It was the "first even," between three and six, Mt. 14.15. Mark tells us what happened at the close of the day; John tells us what Jesus said when he saw the multitude.—*His disciples came unto him.* According to Jn. 6.5-9, Jesus put

Philip to the test by asking him where they might buy bread for the multitude; Philip replied that two hundred shillings' worth of bread would be necessary, and Andrew reported that a lad had five barley loaves and two fishes. It must have been after this conversation that the disciples came and asked Jesus to send the people away.—*The place is desert.* Without villages.—*Give ye them to eat. Ye* is emphatic in the Greek.—*Shillings.* The word in the Greek denotes a coin worth about eight pence half-penny, or nearly seventeen cents, RVm. A denarius, or "penny," was the pay for a day's labor.—*When they knew.* They found a lad with the food, Jn. 6.8, 9.—*Two fishes.* Fish were dried or pickled and eaten with bread.

39-44. *Sit down.* Greek *recline.*—*In ranks.* Literally, *like beds in a garden,* the first adverb, *by companies,* describes the arrangement; this, the color. As Dr. Vincent reminds us, the red, blue and yellow clothing of the poorest orientals make an Eastern crowd full of color; a fact which would appeal to the eye of Peter (Mark's informant), suggesting the appearance of flower-beds in a garden.—*He blessed.* "The customary form of blessing, which Christ probably used, was 'Blessed art thou, Jehovah, our God, who causeth bread to come forth from the earth'" (*Edersheim*).—*He gave.* The Greek verb is in the imperfect tense—*he kept giving.*—*Broken pieces.* Not the fragments left by the multitude, but the broken pieces not distributed.—*That nothing be lost,* John adds (6.12); it was a protest against needless waste.—*Basketfuls.* The Greek word κοφίνους means the provision baskets which were carried by the Jews. Probably each of the apostles had one.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

31. *Come ye yourselves apart and rest a while.* The expressions of sailors are short and sharp, for when gales are blowing, rocks are on the lee, or fogs are creating serious dangers of collision, there is no time for lengthy phrases or for labored explanations. Such an expression is the order: "Belay where you are!" which directs a seaman who has been hauling in on a rope, or paying out on a line, to take a few turns round a pin or coil, and so make it fast. In effect, the seaman is ordered to stop where he is, and to await further directions, as they may be needed later.

In life at large it is often necessary to give the curt order: "Belay where you are!" After a certain amount of action, reaction comes; after a degree of labor, special activity must be directed to conserving the results of that effort hitherto. God's Word tells us that at times particular precautions are to be taken lest spiritual values "slip." It is always possible for the skein of spirituality to unravel; there is always a chance that the water will flow by the mill wheel without turning it. Care, then, must incessantly be taken to conserve the results of one's labors thus far, by use of the rachets of prayer and precaution, which engage the teeth of the cog-wheel (after it has been strenuously turned to a certain point), and so prevent its slipping back. *Zion's Herald.*

He invited them to a desert place for rest, which they never reached. Yet the short voyage over the sea with Christ must have been rest for them. His presence is home, his voice is music, his look is sunshine, his touch is life. *Dr. G. C. Morgan,* in *The Analyzed Bible.*

34. *He had compassion on them.* His instructions to his disciples were of inestimable importance; but I doubt if even they were as important as the example of deep humility, exhaustless kindness, and affecting compassion which is here exhibited. When the Master places work before us which can be done at no other time, our convenience must yield to other men's necessities. The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. *Dr. Wayland Hoyt,* in *A Day in the Life of Jesus of Nazareth.*

37. *Give ye them to eat.* That nation is poor and that family is poor that raises only enough corn and wheat for its own use. God himself would be poor if, when I asked him for something, he gave me only just what I asked for. I never had a prayer answered in that way in my life. He gives me more than I ask or can ever think of. God's beautiful pastures are always green when everything is bare and brown. We have only to lift our faces and ask for our daily bread, and lo! all the world is his granary. And the bountiful

God is bending over us, and all the fields of the world and all the store-houses of heaven are emptied to feed his hungry children. *Robert J. Burdette.*

38. *How many loaves have ye?* We are learning more and more, to some people's dismay, to other people's joy and inspiration, how nature loves to develop, how rare the acts of real creation are. The farmer goes and stands among rich western fields, and they cry out to him, "Give us seed and we will give you back a harvest that shall bewilder you with its immensity. There is no end to what we can do if you give us seed, but without seed we can do nothing." You go to Nature and say, "Feed me or I shall starve;" and her question comes back to you, "How many loaves have you? Give me something to begin with, however little it may be." Drop the old remnants of a past life into the ever fruitful soil, and all the possibilities of new life open. The springtime finds last summer's roots still remaining in the ground, and quickens them to life again, and multiplies them into a richer summer still. Ingenious Nature finds a germ wherever it is dropped; but without the germ she will do nothing.

The same is true of truths. All the history of the progress of men's thought bears witness that when God wants to give men knowledge which they have not had before, he always opens it to them out of something which they have already known.

"How is it with Revelation? How is it with Christianity?" you say. There, more than anywhere, it certainly is true that God works continuously and economically. What does Judaism mean? When God wanted to give the world the truth of Christ, he took that Hebrew nation which had some truth, truth of the right sort, though it was very meagre and insufficient; and mixed up with other things which were not true; he took that truth and brought Christianity out of that. Condensed from *The Candle of the Lord,* by *Phillips Brooks.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

39. *He commanded them that all should sit down by companies.* In a large area in India devastated by drought this year there was one village which had been blessed with a shower so abundant and timely that it reaped an excellent crop. In gratitude the villagers sent thirteen carloads of cooked food to feed the multitude at a religious gathering. The numbers in the throng who sought by moving about and by stealth to secure double portions suggest, says a missionary, the reason why Christ had the multitudes sit down in companies.

41. *Five barley loaves and two fishes.* Barley bread was so coarse that it was given to Roman soldiers only as a punishment, but it was the customary food of the poor in Palestine and therefore of Jesus and his company of disciples. The loaves of bread were very thin, round or oval in shape (the Arabs at the present day have the same "circles of bread"), and they were always broken, never cut. The fish were not fresh, but dried. The Greek word translated *fish* may be used for anything eaten with bread as a relish. "When the fellahin are on a journey or at work in the fields, they content themselves with dry bread eaten with a few figs, raisins or dried fish," says Mr. Wilson. "The midday meal of a middle class house in Jerusalem in the first century consisted of fish from the lake, locusts baked in flour, or honey, onions, and meat. For dessert the cheapest fruits were grapes and figs. The poor had to live more moderately. The lake fishermen, in particular, rarely tasted meat; bread, hard boiled eggs, and the produce of their fishing, with locusts and water, formed the staple of their food."

A Tray of Bread.

43. *Twelve basketfuls.* See page 349.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Several weeks previous to the time of this lesson, Jesus had sent his disciples on their mission tour, Lesson X. On their return he met them at some well-

known spot on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee and listened to their report of all the things they had done and taught. The fame of Jesus was now at its height; see page 332. The crowd that soon collected made necessary a retirement to a more secluded spot. The "desert place" to which they went in the boat was near Bethsaida (Lk. 9.10), on the eastern shore of the lake (John). The word *desert* here does not mean an arid waste but a secluded spot, a region away from the haunts of men; it might be pasture land or forest.

The time was March or April, A. D. 29. For a comparison of this event with the feeding of the four thousand, see page 390. Assign paragraphs 51, 130-132, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

You will have no difficulty in teaching this entire lesson, graphically. Use the map, and give your pupils Tissot's pictures No. 43, Jesus Commanding his Disciples to rest, and 48, Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, and Perry No. 684, Murillo's Feeding the Five Thousand. Teach the Third Topic with its illustrations. Call for these stanzas by Mrs. L. B. Ayres, given to your class last week:

Lord, when to thee a little lad
  Brought the small loaves of bread,
Thy touch enlarged the gift until
  Five thousand men were fed.

So wilt thou use our little gifts
  Of time and work and love
To bring to many a suffering child
  Sweet comfort from above.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever make plans for a day of pleasure and then have them spoiled by some one else? Did you ever begin to make a kite or a doll's dress, and then have your work interrupted by your mother who wished you to go on an errand for her? Did you leave your work and go willingly, pleasantly, gladly? We have a lesson to-day that shows how Jesus accepted an interruption to his plans. Where had Jesus recently sent the disciples and for what purpose, as we learned two weeks ago?

For Older Pupils. The writer of "Changing China" tells of an attractive title which was unwittingly given to a mission society in China. The workers explained to an educated Chinese that they wanted a name which should convey to the people the thought that they would feed the souls of men. He understood perfectly, he said, and at once wrote down two characters which he assured them represented what they said about the spiritual food provided, and would prove very popular with the Chinese, as indeed it proved. The moment the door of the chapel was opened they were besieged by Chinese of the poorer class, who listened for a short time and left in great discontent. Afterwards the missionaries found out that the title given them, literally translated, was, "Health-Giving Free Restaurant."

How forcibly this recalls the time when Jesus had to say to the peasants of Palestine, Ye seek me for the loaves and fishes! It is an oft-studied lesson which we have to-day, but one so full of many meanings for us that it can never lose its interest.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Crowd

Different Attitudes toward a Crowd. In this morning's paper there is an account of the over-crowding of a New York church. One of the members of the church speaks of those who do not belong to the church but come to hear the popular preacher as "perigrinating religious rubbernecks." When John Wesley began his work as a national evangelist in England and Scotland some of the clergyman refused to let him preach in their churches, because, they said,

"The people crowd so that they block up the church and leave no room for the best of the parish." This scornful attitude toward the multitude has always existed. "All the splendid intellectualism of Greece existed for the favored few; beneath that glittering edifice of art and letters lay the dungeons of the slaves. It was the same with Rome; it was an empire of privilege, in which the multitude had no part. Jewish society was built after the same pattern, except that with the Pharisees the sense of religious superiority bred a kind of arrogance much more bitter than that which is the fruit of intellectual or social exclusiveness."

In Jesus' attitude toward a crowd we see the greatness of his heart. Again and again we read of his having compassion upon the multitude (188 times the word *multitude* occurs in the Gospels): to him they were always as sheep without a shepherd and no matter how weary he was nor how important the teaching they interrupted, he always uncomplainingly and gladly turned to them in pity. In the desert place apart where he and his disciples had gone because rest seemed imperative and freedom for counsel necessary as well, Jesus might well have refused to be annoyed and interrupted by the crowd. Not so. Whoever came to him he would in no wise cast out; a crowd was ever to him an opportunity.

A Lesson from Dr. Jowett. Last week Dr. J. H. Jowett gave a sermon upon this text, He saw a great multitude and he had compassion on them. Jesus saw the crowd as sheep—worried, mangled, fleeced, scattered,—hunted by disappointments, chased by disaster, followed by the black hound called death. First he said, —Poor sheep! Then he said, What a harvest! "Poor sheep," said the Master, "so wearied, so worn, so torn, so tired out—so ready! So bruised—so ready for me! So mauled and bleeding— so ready for the Physician. So tired—so ready to be reaped into rest." Were our Lord here to-day he would look with compassion upon our worried business men, upon the crowds of pleasure-loving men and women at music-halls and theaters, upon the restless crowds of the streets. From the text Dr. Jowett learns three things he said: First, I learn what my Saviour thought about a crowd; secondly, I learn what my Saviour felt about a crowd; and because I learn these two things I learn how the disciples of Jesus have to think and feel about a crowd.

Ballington Booth's Reminder. Learn from your Saviour's attitude the way in which you should look upon the multitude. You will then sympathize with those who earn starvation wages, and whose hourly fight is to keep the wolf of hunger from their doors. Your heart will go out to those whose children toil in the overheated factories; to those who stitch in stifling rooms finishing twelve dozen garments a day after school hours at one-half cent each; to the children who make as many as eighteen thousand artificial violets a week for which they receive $4.50; to those puny, feeble workers who pull the bastings from the garments of expensive custom-made clothes for a pittance which barely keeps the roof over their head.

The Student Volunteer in Peking, China. He preached till after midnight to eager, listening crowds, and as he dropped upon his bed, too weary to speak, with aching throat and parched lips he still breathed a prayer of thankfulness that to him had been given this opportunity. As the Father gave his beloved sleep, the boy murmured, "I will rest long in the morning."

At four o'clock, which came all too soon, he heard the call, "Teacher of the Gospel, arise; it is now full light, and the people are assembling to hear you." Could he, whose Master, seeking rest in the wilderness, had pity on the multitudes, refuse? Springing lightly up, dressing quickly, he fell upon his knees in prayer for strength, and then, Bible in hand, went forth to give his message. Till noon he preached and taught, with scarcely time for food or drink.

Then when the crowd withdrew, food was placed before him and he was told to rest; but as he sat with bowl and chopsticks still in hand, there came together the farmers from the country round about, asking that instead of their usual noonday nap they might hear this wonderful gospel of rest for their souls. "And who was I," he said, "to deny these hard-working men who preferred hearing God's Word to their own rest after toiling from the first streak of dawn? Besides, these could not read and the spoken story was the only one that could reach them." So again he gladly gave himself to loving ministry. *Alice Terrell,* in *Woman's Missionary Friend.*

II The Bread of Life

The True Meaning of the Miracle. We call Christ's miracles "wonders," deeds that excite surprise because of their unusualness; "mighty works," because they show unusual power; "signs," because they prove his unique, divine mission; they are also parables, because they illustrate in the physical realm his power in the spiritual kingdom. He satisfied the physical hunger of the five thousand by feeding them with barley bread; and this was an acted parable, typifying his power to satisfy their spiritual hunger with the Bread of life, himself.

The miracle of feeding the five thousand is told by all the Evangelists, but John alone gives its true meaning. The multitude followed Jesus to Capernaum and there he said to them: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled. Work not for the food that perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. I am the Bread of life.

Who covet the Living Bread? How many of us have no idea what Christ means by being the Bread of Life, simply because we have not first of all asked ourselves what we wish life itself to be! If life be for us, what it is for so many, something out of which is shut not only what is God-like, but even the higher human affections—in which aspirations after unselfishness are regarded as misleading—in which we take no more interest in our fellow than our curiosity or our avarice excites—in which we can not know God as our Father, because we fear him only as the incalculable foe that may disappoint our selfish hopes—in which we can not know our fellow-men as brethren, because we only recognize them as our rivals for the good things and snug places of the world,—then we have no need of Christ, and his offer of himself as the Bread of our lives will fall meaningless on our ears. But if life for us be otherwise; if we choose to see life in its largest meanings, and lay upon our hearts its real possibilities; if life be to us the power to grow away from sin, to stand through temptation and to wear down adversity; if it be the recovery of failure, and the healing of wounds, and the courage against death; if we have known that we come from the Father, who has made his image our ideal, and our destiny the perfect performance of his will; if we feel how far we are from his image, and how terribly difficult that will is to do,—I say, if life be such a liberty, and such a hope, and such an agony, then Christ alone is the strength of our lives. He will not fail us in any of its wants and struggles; but he that cometh to him shall never hunger, and he that believeth in him shall never thirst. *George Adam Smith,* in *The Forgiveness of Sins.*

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this sun?"
"Bravely!" said he, "for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ the Living Bread!"

Matthew Arnold.

Take, eat. You do not understand how Jesus can be the Bread of Life, you say. Do you understand how barley or wheat bread can sustain the physical life? Even Voltaire questioned: "Ask by what secret mystery this bread and this meat digest in the body, and are transformed into prepared milk? How, always filtered in its unerring course, does it run in long purple streams to swell my veins? How does it give to my languishing body new power, and make my heart beat, and my brain think?"

The fact that a man can not live long without food and water we all know. He can not sustain himself; his strength and his very life must be sustained by the food he eats. Just as true is it that the spiritual life cannot sustain itself. Our table may be bountifully supplied with food, but if we merely look at it, admire it perhaps, but do not eat it, it can do us no good. The Bread of Life is

not Bread for us unless we "take and eat." There is, moreover, a certain diseased condition of the body which sometimes prevents the food taken from being turned into flesh and blood, and a sufferer from "insufficient nourishment" may die no matter how much food he eats. So one may carelessly read over a certain number of verses in the Bible daily without appropriating to oneself their meaning, and that is not feeding on the word of God. To feed on Christ is to assimilate him, and we may know that his strength has not become our strength if we are not doing deeds that are Christlike.

Give.

Doth the bread he gave to thee
Stay thy spirit steadfastly?
If thyself thou still wouldst feed,
Share the bread with those in need.

Sarah Avery Faunce.

III MISSIONARY TOPIC GIVE YE THEM TO EAT

Helpers of Christ. Just as Jesus asked his twelve disciples to feed the multitude of five thousand men besides women and children, so he asks us to do what seems impossible, relying on him to make it possible. Aquila and Priscilla were humble "work-a-day folk," yet Paul calls them gratefully, "My helpers in Christ Jesus." Paul was the first great Christian missionary, and he followed Christ's methods. Everywhere he journeyed he founded churches and relied on the people there to become his helpers and carry on the work. To-day in Africa there are stations among the heathen nations that require only one half as many American missionaries as formerly because native evangelists are pushing the work.

Another Lad's Fish. "It's no use," sighed Peter, according to a story in *Around the World,* "I can't think of one single thing to do that will bring me any money to put into the missionary box. Miss Potter talked to us about giving our talents, but I haven't got any talents unless it is for going fishing." Suddenly Peter struck his hands together. "My," he exclaimed, "I never thought of that. I believe I'll try it."

So he went to the barn and got his fishing tackle, which wasn't very elaborate. Peter knew the mountain brooks the best of all the village boys, and that day he fished more carefully than he ever did before, because of the big purpose in his heart. He even went to the deep hole, where the foaming brook comes over the cliff, and there he caught his largest trout. "He will weigh half a pound if he weighs an ounce!" cried Peter. He caught many more.

Twenty-five trout, all nicely laid in cool leaves, Peter brought back to the village. "But the hardest part of my job is to come," he said. "Guess I'll try Mrs. Purington first." "O you delightful boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Purington when Peter opened his basket. "Just what I want for my city boarders."

The next Sunday when the missionary box was passed Peter put the dollar bill, all folded tightly, into it. Miss Potter looked surprised, and then she let her hands rest on Peter's shoulder and said, "Well done, Peter!"

The Story of Subhodra. When Jesus took the bread and fish to feed the people who were hungry, he told us, too, who love him, to feed those who are hungry. Most of the boys and girls who go to Sunday-school in America do not get very hungry, although sometimes they think they do. But almost always there is enough food somewhere in this country where we live. We may not have as much ice cream and candy as we would like, but there are some countries on the other side of the world where the people have only rice and grain. They eat it every day. Then there comes a day when it does not rain, and the rice and wheat cannot grow. Then everybody is hungry.

There was a great lady in India called Ramabai, who had a beautiful big home for women and girls. They had all the rice they needed to eat. But one day the people all through the country found they had nothing to eat. The rice and grain did not grow. It would not rain. The sun burned up everything. The cows died. The people grew very thin. Then the great lady who had made the home for Subhodra and the other girls, asked if they could help. "Every Sunday," said she, "we will not eat our dinner, but we will go without it, and save it to give to the hungry children who do not have any food." So

all the girls who lived in this house gave their Sunday dinners to the hungry children.

Then one day the great lady, Ramabai, went out to where the people were dying because they had nothing to eat. Some of the mothers had run away from their babies because they had nothing to give them to eat. Ramabai brought the babies into her pleasant home. She said: "I can't take care of all the babies unless the girls will help. Who is willing to take a baby to feed and watch and dress?"

Subhodra said, "I will." She picked up a baby that was not pretty. She said, "I would rather have a baby that isn't pretty. Anybody could love a pretty baby." So the poor, thin, ugly baby had somebody to feed and love it. *Condensed from Missionary Comments.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Solitude is my great ordinance. *Cecil.*

All God's biddings are enablings. *Berridge.*

If Jesus is indeed the Bread of Life, to miss him is to perish. *J. Stuart Holden.*

The recurrence of the Sabbath day is a perpetual reminder of the need of going apart and resting awhile. *J. E. McFadyen.*

Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Ps. 78.19.

The wheat field supports the body, but it does this in the hope that the body will support the spirit. *David Swing.*

Give us this day our daily bread. Mt. 6.11.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger. Jn. 6.35.

For he satisfieth the longing soul,
And the hungry soul he filleth with good. Ps. 107.9.

Begin every morning with fervent prayer, and breakfast your soul on God's glorious, infallible, inspiring Book. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

O Heavenly Father, we praise thee for the great gift of bread. May we remember that the bread is made of thy sunshine and of the labor of man. So it shall feed in our hearts confidence and love for thee and gratitude and cheerfulness for our brethren. *Charles Wagner.*

Let me remember the multiplying power of God in all my earthly affairs. My opportunities in the spiritual life may be very meager; but in my scraps of knowledge, my narrow resources, my restricted privileges, I may find bread enough, and to spare. *Dr. Watkinson.*

If we looked on the crowds in our great cities with Christ's eyes, their spiritual state would be the most prominent thing in sight. And if we saw that as he saw it, disgust, condemnation, indifference, would not be uppermost, as they too often are, but some drop of his great compassion would trickle into our hearts. Do we habitually try to cultivate as ours Christ's way of looking at men, and Christ's emotions toward men? If we do, we shall imitate Christ's actions for men. *Dr. Maclaren.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The importance of satisfying physical as well as spiritual hunger.
2. The Church's interest in the crowd, the men on the street, the plain people.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Give pupils the subjects selected for their written work to be brought to class next Sunday. See page 363.

Have them record this lesson in their Note Books as they have been doing from week to week.

REVIEW

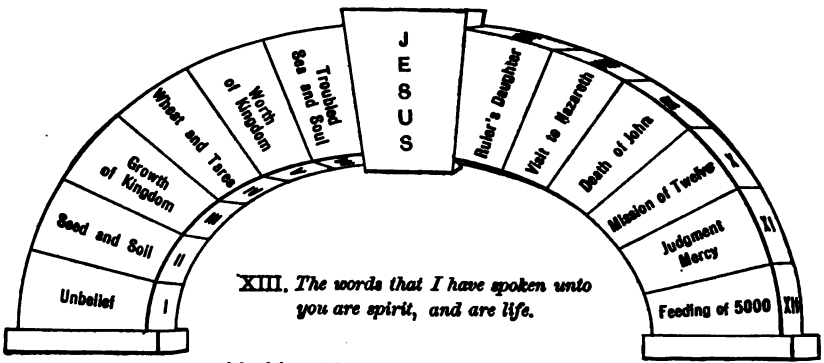
Golden Text

The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life, John 6.63

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 3.20-35. Malignant Unbelief. Mark 4.1-20. The Seed in the Four Kinds of Soil. **T.** Mark 4.26-32; Matt. 13.33. The Growth of the Kingdom. Matt. 13.24-30, 36-43. The Wheat and the Tares. **W.** Matt. 13.44-53. The Worth of the Kingdom. Mark 4.35—5.20. A Troubled Sea and a Troubled Soul. **T.** Mark. 5.21-43. The Ruler's Daughter. Luke 4.16-30. The Visit to Nazareth. **F.** Mark 6.14-29. The Death of John the Baptist. Matt. 9.35—10.15; 10.40—11.1. The Mission of the Twelve. **S.** Matt. 11.20-30.. Judgment and Mercy. **S.** Mark 6.30-44. The Feeding of the Five Thousand. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

This review may be given by twelve persons besides the leader. Have the arch drawn upon the blackboard beforehand. Let the leader call for the Subject and Golden Text of the first lesson, and then write "Unbelief" in the first block, and on another part of the board the Outline, Chief Persons and Chief Fact, as given below. Then let the one appointed give a three-minute talk about the first lesson. See page 136.

A REVIEW FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL



I. Declared **B**eside himself
Beelzebub's agent

Jesus explains the **E**ternal sin
Eternal kinship.

II. Four Kinds of Soil **T**rodden
Thin
Thorny
True.

III. True Growth of the Kingdom **S**lowly
Surprisingly
Surely.

IV. **H**ere
Hereafter wheat and tares **C**ommingled
Cast apart.

V. A **P**recious
Pearl **H**idden
Hoard and a net **F**illed with
Fish.

VI. A troubled **S**oul **S**ea Obeyed by the **E**lements **E**vil spirits.

VII. The **R**uler's **R**equest granted and his **D**ead **D**aughter raised.

VIII. **S**ermon **S**purned **D**eath **D**eliverance **S**ought **S**ecured.

IX. **H**erod **H**erodias and the **D**ancing **D**amsel cause **B**eheading of **B**aptist.

X. The **C**ompassion of Jesus
Call of the Twelve
Charge to the Twelve.

XI. The great **R**ebuker and
Rest-giver.

XII. The **F**eeding of the
Five-thousand.

	Chief Persons	Chief Fact.
I.	Friends, Scribes, Jesus, his Mother, Brethren and Disciples.	A Great Kinship.
II.	Multitude, Disciples, Jesus.	A Great Parable.
III.	The same.	A Great Growth.
VI.	The same.	A Great Separation.
V.	The same.	A Great Prize.
VI.	Jesus, Disciples, Demoniac, Gerasenes.	A Great Miracle.
VII.	Jesus, Jairus and his Daughter, Peter, James and John.	A Great Power.
VIII.	Jesus, the Nazarenes.	A Great Rejection.
IX.	Herod, Herodias and her Daughter, John the Baptist.	A Great Murder.
X.	Jesus, Disciples.	A Great Mission.
XI.	Jesus, Disciples.	A Great Invitation.
XII.	Jesus, Disciples, Five Thousand.	A Great Meal.

A REVIEW FOR LITTLE FOLKS

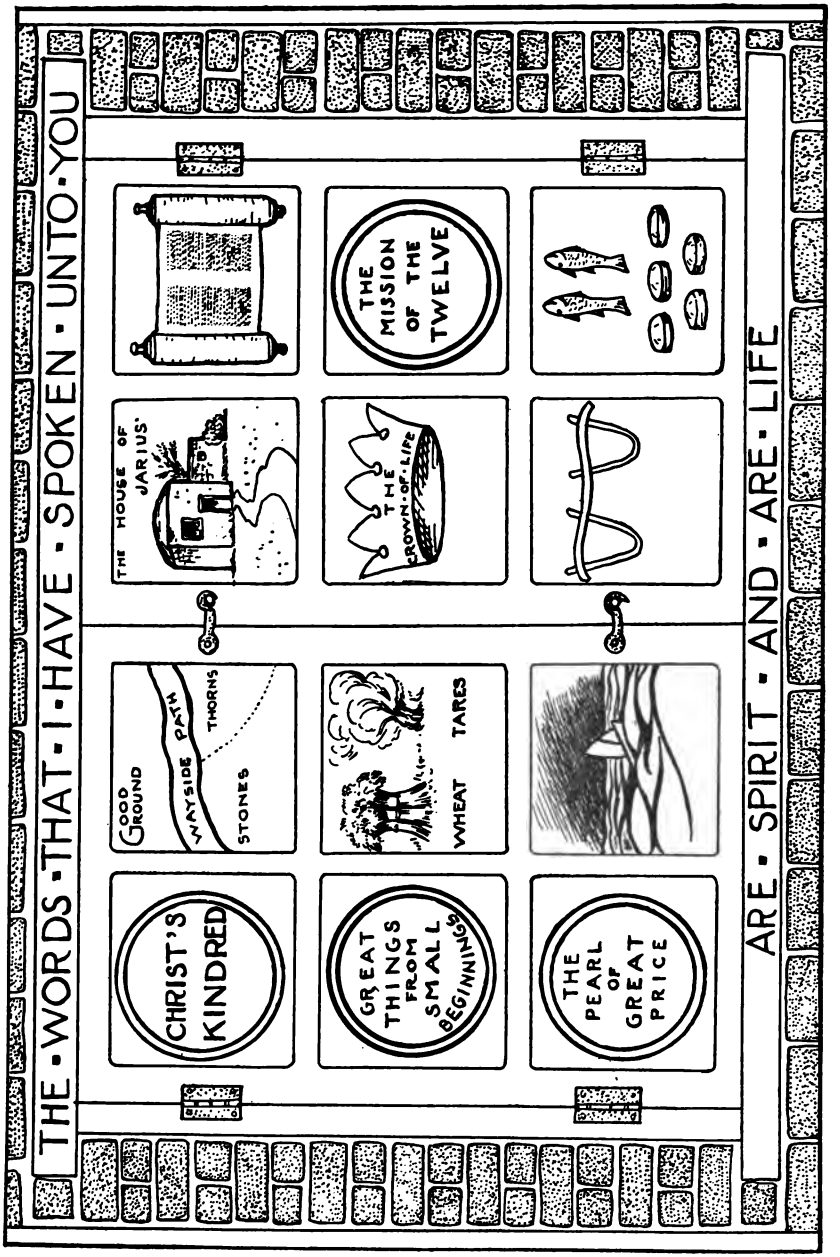
Have the pictures on the next page copied upon the blackboard, or upon a piece of cardboard large enough to be easily seen by all in your class. Each square should be covered by a piece of paper attached by a little paste so that it can be quickly removed. Tear off one paper at a time, and question your pupils about the lesson which the picture recalls.

A REVIEW FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

See directions on page —.

I. One day so many ... crowded around Jesus that he and his disciples could not even ... When his ... heard about it they said that he was ... himself to allow this. Later his ... and his ... came and called him. When Jesus was told that they were ... him he looked about him and said, Behold my ... and my ... for whosoever shall do the ... of God, the same is my ... and ... and ....

II. One day by the ... Jesus taught the ... many things in parables. One was about the ... who went forth to ... Some of the ... fell by the ... and the ... devoured it; other ... fell on ... ground and soon ... away; yet other ... fell among the ... and when the ... grew up they ... it. But some of the ... fell on ... ground and yielded much fruit, thirty fold and ... and ... When they were alone the ... asked Jesus to explain this ... Some people's hearts are ... so that the ... which is the ... of God cannot enter; other ... receive the ... with joy at ... but they soon neglect it; others hear


THE · WORDS · THAT · I · HAVE · SPOKEN · UNTO · YOU
CHRIST'S KINDRED
GOOD GROUND
WAYSIDE PATH
THORNS
STONES
THE HOUSE OF JARIUS'
GREAT THINGS FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS
WHEAT
TARES
THE CROWN OF LIFE
THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE
THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE
ARE · SPIRIT · AND · ARE · LIFE

the ... but cares and other things ... it, but there are ... who are like the ... ground for they bring forth fruit ... and ... and ....

III. Jesus spoke three ... about the ... of the kingdom. The ... of God is as if a man should cast ... upon the earth, which ... in a way he cannot explain, first the ..., then the ..., then the full ... in the ... When the fruit is ... then he ... it. The ... of God is like a grain of ... seed, one of the ... of all seeds, yet when it is ... it puts out great ... where the ... of heaven can lodge. The ... of ... is like ... which a woman ... in three ... of ... till it was all ....

IV. In another ... Jesus compared the ... of ... to a man sowing ... seed in his ...; but while he ... an ... came and sowed ... among the ... His ... wished to ... up the ... but the man said to let them all ... together until the ... then the reapers would gather up the ... in bundles to ... them, and ... the ... into his ... The ... asked for an explanation of the ... The sower of the ... is the ... of ..., said Jesus and the field is the ...; the ... seed are the sons of the ..., the ... are the sons of the ... one, the enemy is the ..., the harvest is the ... of the world, and the ... are the angels. The son of ... shall send forth his ... and gathering out of his kingdom the wicked shall cast them into the ... of ... Then shall the ... shine forth as the ... in the kingdom of their Father.

V. The ... of the Kingdom Jesus explained in ... parables. It is ... a ... hidden in the ... for which a man who finds it ... all that he has in order to ... the field. It is like a ... seeking goodly ... who finding one ... of great ... sells all that he ... to ... it. It is like a ... cast into the ... and drawn upon the ... full of all kinds of ... The good are gathered into ... but the ... are ... way. So shall it be in the ... of the world; the ... shall be ... from the ....

VI. On their way across the ... of ... a great ... arose. The ... were greatly ... and they ... Jesus who was asleep in the ... Teacher, said they, ... thou not that we ...? And he ... the wind and said unto the ... Peace be ... And the ... ceased, and there was a great ... Why are ye ..., have ye not yet faith? Jesus asked. And they said one to another, Who then is this, that even the ... and the ... ... him.

On reaching the country of the Gerasenes, there came toward them a man from the ... who had an ... spirit. He had often been ... with chains, but he ... them and no man had strength to ... him. This man ran and worshipped Jesus, crying out, "What have I to ... with ..., Jesus, thou ... of the Most High God? What is thy ...? Jesus asked, and the man answered, My ... is ..., for we are many. Send us into the herd of ..., they besought him, and Jesus gave them ... The unclean spirits entered into the ..., and the herd rushed down the steep into the ..., and they were ... in the sea. The owners of the swine came and found the demon-possessed sitting clothed and in his right ..., and learned what had befallen their ... They besought Jesus to ... from their ... As Jesus was entering the ... to depart the man who had been possessed with ... begged to go with him, but Jesus said, Go to thy ... to thy ..., and tell them how great ... the ... hath done for thee, and how he had ... on thee.

VII. One day a ruler of the ..., ... by name, came to Jesus and begged him to come to his ... and cure his little ... On the way they were met by friends from the ... home, who said that his ... was ... Fear not, only ..., were Jesus' comforting words to the ... With three only of the disciples, ... and ... and ..., Jesus entered the house where there was a great ..., many ... and wailing. Why make ye a tumult? Jesus asked, the child is not ..., but ... And they ... him to scorn. With the father and ... Jesus entered the room where the child was and said to her Talitha cumi, *i. e.* Damsel, I say unto thee, ... And at once she ... and ... Great was the ... of all the people.

VIII. In his own home town of ... Jesus entered the synagogue one day on the ... and read these words from the prophet ...: The spirit of the ... is upon me, because he ... me to preach ... ... to the ..., he hath sent me to proclaim ... to the captors, and recovering of ... to the blind, to set at ... them that are bruised, to proclaim the ... year of the Lord. "To-day," he began to tell them as he sat down, "hath this ... been ... in your ears." "Is not this ... son?" the people questioned, wondering at his words. Then he

continued: "Doubtless you will say to me, Physician, ... thyself: whatsoever we have heard ... at ... do also here in your own country. But no ... is ... in his own country." And then he reminded them that in the time of famine Elijah was sent to none save a ... of Zarephath, and ... cleansed no ... save ... the Syrian. The people were enraged and taking him to the brow of the ... on which their city was ... they tried to ... him down but he ... through the midst of them and ... his way.

IX. When king ... heard about the miracles wrought by ... he said that he was ... the ... whom he had ... For Herod had ... John at the demand of ... his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. John had told Herod it was not ... for him to marry her and ... planned to ... him. At a feast her ... danced and ... the king so that he ... her whatsoever she wished. On her mother's ... she asked for the ... of ... the ... The King was sorry but being afraid not to keep his ... he ordered ... beheaded in the ... and his ... brought to the damsel on a ... She took it to her ..., and his disciples came and buried his body.

X. Jesus went throughout the cities and villages teaching and ... and ..., for his heart was moved with ... for the people, who were as ... without a ... The ... indeed is ..., he said, but the ... are few. Pray ye therefore the ... of the harvest, that he send forth ... into his harvest. And Jesus sent forth his ... ... and ... his brother, ... and ... his brother, ... and ..., ... and ... the publican, the son of Alphæus and ..., ... the Cananæan, and ... ... who also ... him. He bade them ... and ... the sick, going forth without ... or ... or ... in their purses, with no wallet for the journey nor with two ... nor ... nor ..., for the laborer, he said, is ... of his food.

XI. About this time Jesus upbraided the ... in which most of his ... works had been done, ... and ... and ..., declaring if they had been done in Tyre and ... those wicked cities would have ... in sackcloth and ashes. And then he thanked his Father that he had ... much from the ... and understanding and had revealed them unto babes. All things had been delivered unto him of his ..., he declared, and no one knew the ... save the ... and he to whomsoever the ... willed to ... him. Then Jesus gave his beautiful invitation. Come unto me all ye that ... and are ... ..., and I will give you ... Take my ... upon you, and ... of me, for I am ... and ... in heart, and ye shall find ... unto your souls. For my ... is and my... is ....

XII. When Jesus tried to ... from the crowds by going to the ... side of the Sea of ..., they watched the course of his ... and followed around the Lake by ... And when Jesus saw the great ... he had ... upon them. The place was ... and toward night the ... asked him to send them away for food, but Jesus told them to ... them to ... Shall we go and buy two hundred ... worth of ...? they asked. How many ... have you? he in turn asked. ... and ... fishes. Then Jesus commanded all to ... down on the green ... by companies, and taking the ... and the ... he looked up to ... and ... gave to the ... for the ... And they all ... and were ..., though they were in number ... ... And there were ... basketfuls of fragments remaining.

A REVIEW BY MEANS OF ALLUSIONS

Whatever the fever, his touch can heal it;
Whatever the tempest, his voice can still!
There is only joy as we seek his pleasure;
There is only rest as we choose his will! *Edith G. Cherry.*

The mission of Jesus is to create a type of character which shall be sown like good seed in the waiting field and shall possess it as children of the kingdom. *Francis Greenwood Peabody.*

With joy we sound the bugle call to all Woman's Foreign Missionary Society women in America to begin an active, systematic, two-and-two canvass of the women of Methodism to win their co-operation in this work. *Mrs. Wm. F. McDowell.*

"Do thy little, though it be
Dreariness and drudgery;
They whom Christ apostles made
Gathered fragments when he bade."

The glory is not in the task; but in
The doing it for him. *Jean Ingelow.*

It is useless to admire John if you keep Herodias. *Alexander Maclaren.*

With bonds, and scorn, and evil will
The world requites its prophets still.
So was it when the Holy One
The garments of the flesh put on!
Men followed where the Highest led
For common gifts of daily bread,
And gross of ear, of vision dim,
Owned not the godlike power of him. *Whittier.*

Hardened and permanent unbelief conjoined with malicious hatred of the only means of forgiveness is the unforgivable sin. *Alexander Maclaren.*

"And, O, when the whirlwind of passion is raging,
When sin in our hearts his wild warfare is waging,
Then send down thy grace, thy redeemed to cherish,
Rebuke the destroyer, save, Lord, or we perish."

"Maiden to my twelfth year come
I have read, in Scripture story,
Of a damsel cold and dumb,
Wakened by the Lord of glory."

"The gift which lay dormant was dedicated to the Master's use and it expanded more than a hundredfold."

'Tis a life-long toil till our lump be leavened. *Browning.*

To him be the glory forever!—We bear
To the Lord of the Harvest the wheat with the tare,
What we lack in our work may he find in our will,
And winnow in mercy the good from the ill. *Whittier.*

The church should have a positive message: She should realize that what she possesses in the religion of Jesus Christ is not one among a number of pearls of similar lustre, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, etc. *Sir G. W. Macalpine.*

A REVIEW OF MEMORIZED VERSES

No prophet is
Who hath

If a house be
Let both grow together
Therefore every scribe who hath
Why are ye
Whosoever shall do
He that soweth the good
The harvest indeed
Woe unto thee

Who then is this
So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast
Then shall the righteous
Go to thy house
Take my yoke
I thank thee, O Father
The Spirit of the Lord is
Pray ye therefore
Come unto me
All things have been delivered

QUESTIONS FOR LITTLE FOLKS

1. Whom did Jesus once call his brother and his sister and his mother?
2. What does a parable tell?
3. What are some things that grow in a heart that is like a weedy or thorny field?
4. What are some things that grow in a heart that is like the good ground field?
5. Tell the parable of the mustard seed.
6. What did Jesus call the good and the evil in one of his parables?
7. Tell the parable about a man who gave up something that was worth much for something that was worth far more.

8. What happened one night on the Sea of Galilee?
9. What was it that Jesus did to a little girl, and who was the girl?
10. In what city did Jesus live as a boy?
11. What did he do one Sabbath day when he went back to visit his old home?
12. What king's conscience troubled him? Why?
13. What twelve men did Jesus choose to help him in his work?
14. What did Jesus say to do when tired or in trouble?
15. To how many people did Jesus give food one day? What did he use?

QUESTIONS FOR AN ORAL OR WRITTEN REVIEW

For Younger Pupils.

1. Name the twelve disciples.
2. What is a parable?
3. Give the names by which the parables of this quarter are known.
4. What parables of Jesus have to do with housework?
5. What parables deal with outdoor work?
6. What is the teaching of the parable about the Pearl of Great Price?
7. Tell a parable which shows what is the value of the Kingdom of Heaven.
8. Tell a parable which shows the sure growth of the Kingdom of Heaven.
9. What is a miracle?
10. What miracle teaches that Jesus is the Peace-bringer to troubled hearts?
11. What miracle proclaims Jesus "The Life-giver who quickens with true life all who believe on him"?
12. What is the only miracle that is given in all the Gospels?
13. From what Book did Jesus read to the people of Nazareth, and what was the result?
14. What incidents show how slow the disciples were in learning to trust Jesus?
15. What lessons show the sympathetic heart of Jesus?
16. What lessons show the wonderful power of Jesus?
17. What lessons show the great courage of Jesus?
18. What lessons show him to be the Great Teacher?
19. What invitation did Jesus give to tired people?
20. What can you tell about the Gospel of St. Luke?

For Older Pupils.

1. What is a parable?
2. What is the difference between a parable and a fable?
3. Why did Jesus use parables?
4. What was the parable of which Gregory the Great said it was "rather to be trembled at than expounded"?
5. By what parables did Jesus declare the nature of the Kingdom of God?
6. What parables did Jesus give that symbolized the expansion of the kingdom?
7. What parables did he give that symbolized the value of the kingdom?
8. Give the optimistic parable.
9. The fact that Christianity's growth is the greatest known in history proves the truth of what parable?
10. Ian Maclaren says that the disciples were to live as Jesus lived, and their influence would conquer the world, that each disciple became a center himself, and so the kingdom grew by multiplying and widening circles of influence. What parable taught this?
11. What is a miracle?
12. Why did Jesus work miracles?
13. What is the only miracle recorded by all the Evangelists?
14. What miracle taught the disciples that safety and deliverance lay in nearness to Jesus?
15. Why did Jesus choose twelve disciples?
16. How did Jesus train his disciples?
17. What were the conflicting feelings in the hearts of the Nazarenes concerning Jesus?
18. Give an account of the circumstances under which Jesus was asked to leave a district.

19. Give an account of the circumstances under which Jesus was forcibly driven from a city.
20. What was Jesus' answer to the charge that he cast out demons by Beelzebub?
21. Of what has Jesus been accused in the lessons so far studied?
22. What was Jesus' invitation to all who labor?
23. When and for whom was the third Gospel written?
24. What are its characteristics?
25. What narratives and parables are peculiar to Luke?

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN WORK TO BE BROUGHT TO CLASS

For Younger Pupils.
1. Write what you think of Herod.
2. Write what you think of John the Baptist.
3. Tell the story of how Jesus was driven out of the town where he had lived as a boy and a young man.
4. Tell the story of the miracle Jesus wrought for a young girl.
5. Tell the story of the way in which a girl helped bring about the murder of a great man.
6. Write in your own words the parable which you like the best.

For Older Pupils.
1. The Life of John the Baptist.
2. Jesus' Methods in the Training of the Twelve.
3. Jesus as the Great Sympathizer.
4. Jesus as the Great Friend.
5. Jesus as the Great Teacher.
6. Jesus as the Great Son of God.
7. The Gospel according to Luke.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What had happened just before this lesson? 2. What effect did the miracle have upon the people, as told by John? 3. On what other occasions did Jesus spend the night alone with God? (Lk. 6.12; 9.18; 22.44; 5.16; 9.29; Mk. 1.35.) 4. What progress had the disciples made when Jesus appeared to them? (Jn. 6.19.) 5. What can you tell about storms upon the Lake? (Clipping, p. 361.) 6. What had Jesus said to his disciples in that previous storm upon the same lake? (Lesson VI, Third Quarter.) 7. When again upon this lake were the disciples amazed at seeing Jesus? (Lk. 24.36, 37.) 8. Where in the Old Testament is God represented as walking upon the waves of the sea? (Job 9.8.) 9. Tell the incident about Peter which Matthew records. (Mt. 14.28-31.) 10. Where was Gennesaret? (Clipping, p. 362.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why did Jesus refuse the honor the people would thrust upon him after the feeding of the five thousand? 2. Why did Jesus want to be alone? 3. Why do you think Jesus had to "constrain" the disciples to leave? 4. Why did he pray? 5. What is a miracle? (Clipping, p. 365.) 6. In what earlier lesson did Jesus show his power over wind and wave? 7. Why would Jesus have passed by? 8. What does verse 52 mean?

FOURTH QUARTER

LESSON I—OCTOBER 6

JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA

Golden Text

Straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. Mt. 14.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 6.45-56. Jesus Walking on the Sea. **T.** Matt. 14.22-33. Peter Walking on the Sea. **W.** Luke 12.22-32. Jesus Forbidding Anxiety. **T.** Matt. 8.23-27. Power of Jesus over Wind and Wave. **F.** Rom. 8.10-17. Bondage to Fear. **S.** Ps. 27.1-6. The Soul's Confidence. **S.** Luke 14.25-33. Jesus Exhorts to Spiritual Adventure. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 6.45-56 READ Mt. 14.2-36 COMMIT vv 49, 50

45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the boat, and to
go before *him* unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the
multitude away. 46 And after he had taken leave of them, he departed into
the mountain to pray. 47 And when even was come, the boat was in the midst
of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48 And seeing them distressed in row-
ing, for the wind was contrary unto them, about the fourth watch of the night
he cometh unto them, walking on the sea; and he would have passed by them:
49 but they, when they saw him walking on the sea, supposed that it was a
ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw him, and were troubled. But he
straightway spake with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I;
be not afraid. 51 And he went up unto them into the boat, and the wind ceased:
and they were sore amazed in themselves; 52 for they understood not con-
cerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened.
53 And when they had crossed over, they came to the land unto Gennesaret,
and moored to the shore. 54 And when they were come out of the boat,
straightway *the people* knew him, 55 and ran round about that whole region,
and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he
was. 56 And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the
country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and besought him that they
might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched
him were made whole.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

45-46. *Straightway.* After the feeding of the five thousand, our lesson two weeks ago.—*Constrained.* The disciples were unwilling to go, doubtless because they sympathized with the desire of the multitude to make Jesus king. See Historical Background.—*The other side.* Of the Sea of Galilee.—*Departed into the mountain.* See Jn. 6.15.

47-52. *Even.* The second evening, from twilight to darkness.—*In the midst of the sea.* They had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs (three to three and a half miles), Jn. 6.19.—*The fourth watch of the night.* The Jews had but three night watches, the Romans had four, and the fourth was from three to six in the morning.—*He would have passed them by.* Indicating that his purpose was to test them or else not to startle them too suddenly.—*A ghost.* The Jews believed in apparitions.—*He saith unto them.* The incident in regard to Peter is told only by Matthew 14.27-31.—*The wind ceased.* He maketh the storm a calm, Psa. 107.29.—*They understood not.*

The Authorized Version has *considered not:* they had not understood because they had not considered.—*The loaves.* The feeding of the five thousand which had just occurred: had they understood that miracle, they would not have wondered at the miracle of walking on the waves.—*Their heart was hardened.* Failure to consider as well as unwillingness to hear hardens the heart.

53-56. *Crossed...Gennnesaret.* Or, *crossed over to the land, they came unto Gennesaret,* RVm.—*Beds.* Or, *pallets,* RVm. See page 122.—*Him.* Or, *it,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

49. *They saw him walking on the sea.* The disciples were being trained for a work, the dangers, difficulties, and disappointments of which would be so many and great, that only an invincible and triumphant constancy of faith could carry them through. By faith they must remove mountains and cast them into the midst of the sea; they must attempt and achieve the humanly impossible; they must never falter in their belief that God can do all things. How were they to be taught this lesson? would words, however eloquent, be sufficient? Are not deeds more persuasive than words? When the storm was changed to calm they learned that with Jesus they were in God's hand, and that he could and would do all that was needful for their safety. When Jesus came to them on the water they learned that his presence and protection would ever be with them, and though they might be forgetful of him, he would never forget them. If we realize that the establishment and extension of God's Kingdom depended on the faith of these men, their faith in God's omnipresent care, omniscient wisdom, and omnipotent might, the difficulty in believing even such miracles may be removed. *A. E. Garvie,* in *The Expositor.*

49. *They supposed that it was a ghost.* Was not that terror which mistook Jesus for a spirit, an index to a mental excitement, caused by danger, which would have had no existence on a calm night? The statement made both in Matthew and in Mark that when Jesus entered the ship the wind ceased points in the same direction. The interest of the divine kingdom seems to have been exposed to a twofold peril at that crisis; on the one hand through a false enthusiasm among the people, and on the other through a storm on the lake threatening the lives of the few faithful though as yet unenlightened followers of the Christ. Jesus having first dealt with the one peril on the land, proceeded next to deal with the other on the deep. *A. B. Bruce,* in *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels.*

50. *Be of good cheer.* It is the "cheer up" of our homely vernacular. Outside the pages of the Evangelists we only find it once, and that is in Acts 23.11, when the angel sings it into the heart of Paul. It is often coming, however, from the lips of Jesus, dropping as a gleam of sunshine upon dark and blighted lives, and, like the touch of an angel, helping them to rise and step out into liberty and light. *Henry Burton,* in *Gleanings in the Gospels.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

48. *For the wind was contrary unto them.* I spent a night on the mountains east of the lake. The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to blow towards the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we descended to the shore the next morning the surface of the lake was like a boiling cauldron. The wind swept down every wady from the northeast and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to land at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low (680 feet below the sea); that the mountainous plateau of the Jaulan rises to a considerable height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran and upward to the snowy Hermon; that the watercourses have worn or washed out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of the lake; and that these act like great funnels, to draw down the cold winds from the mountains.

We pitched our tents upon the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to that vehement wind. We had to double-pin the tent ropes, and fre-

quently were obliged to hang our whole weight upon them to keep the quivering tabernacles from being carried bodily up into the air. The whole lake was lashed into fury. *William M. Thomson,* in *The Land and the Book.*

49. *They supposed that it was a ghost.* The appearance of any unusual and inexplicable natural phenomenon has in all ages of the world been a cause of terror. Among the popular superstitions of Eastern people is one in which the mysterious appearance at night of a person is supposed to indicate the death of that person, or else the death of the person who observes it. Traces of the same belief are found in the Anglo-Saxon race, in the use of the word "wraith" as applied to such appartions. This was the popular signification of the Greek word phantasma, a phantasm, which is the word used in this text, and here translated by the word "apparition" in the English Revised Version. *Albert L. Long,* in *Sunday School Times.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After hearing the news of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus, as we have seen, deemed it best for him to withdraw from Galilee for a time, and he went to the mountainous country northeast of the Sea of Galilee, whither the five thousand followed and he had compassion upon them and fed them. That miracle accomplished far more than the satisfaction of physical hunger; it gave Jesus an opportunty of teaching the people that he was the Bread of Life, and of sifting them. Popular enthusiasm for him had reached its climax, but it was based upon selfish desires and foolish expectations, for they were seeking him for the loaves and fishes, and because they expected him to become their king to free them from Roman rule. After the miraculous feeding they sought to take him by force and make him King, John tells us, and Jesus' wonderful power is shown in his being able to send the excited crowd away, and make his escape to the mountains for prayer. His own disciples he was obliged to "constrain" to leave, and it may be that they, too, were loth to go because they shared the popular expectation.

The time is March or April, A. D. 29.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The disciples were directed to go before Jesus to the other side to Bethsaida, says Mark; to Capernaum, says John. Perhaps they expected Jesus to join them at Bethsaida Julias, on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, and then to cross to Capernaum; in that case they purposed sailing northward and then westward, but "the contrary wind" coming down the Jordan valley drove them out into the lake away from Bethsaida. But Bethsaida of Galilee, south of Capernaum, may have been their direct destination. The lake is about six miles wide here, and yet in eight hours' time, if the boat left immediately after the miracle, it had gone only some three and a half miles, Jn. 6.19. Gennesaret, where they finally moored their boat, is the plain which extends along the western shore of the lake, which gives it the name by which it was sometimes called, the Lake of Gennesaret.

Assign paragraphs 152, 153, 51 and 133-141, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Tell your pupils about the stormy petrel, the little web-footed bird, smaller than a pigeon, that sailors meet far out in the North Atlantic Ocean. Sometimes we call these birds Mother Carey's chickens. They are usually spoken of as stormy petrels, because they are strong and brave, and not afraid of the hardest storms. But why are they called petrels? When the Italians wish to say "Little Peter" they use one word, Petrello, and from this word the bird has its name of petrel, little Peter. Little Peter seems a strange name for a bird, but it is given to it because it seems to run along the surface of the sea. And why this should give it the name of Little Peter we shall know after we have studied our lesson.

Tell the lesson story, including the incident in regard to Peter recorded in Matthew. Show Plockhorst's picture of Peter walking on the Sea, Wilde 85, or one by Schwartz, Wilde 84. Adapt the Second Topic.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What was our lesson about two weeks ago? What did Jesus bid his disciples do which would have been impossible for them to do without his help? What are some of the things impossible for them which we have seen Jesus do in our lessons? The ancient Egyptians represented their word for *impossible* by a picture of a foot resting upon a waving line that stood for water; an impossible thing was one that could no more be done than could a man walk upon the water. What is the title of our lesson to-day?

For Older Pupils. The Chinese have a scornful name for those of their race who have become Christians—Rice Christians they call them, meaning by the term that the motives of the converts are purely selfish, that they are professing to be Christians only that they may obtain food at the hands of the missionaries. In the time of the Boxer insurrection it was proved that there were very few rice Christians, for the native converts were willing to endure anything rather than give up their religion. Mrs. Cecil Smith, of the China Inland Mission, gives this instance which shows the character of the great majority of the Chinese Christians—Among those who came regularly to worship were a couple of poor country people named Wang. They lived nearly ten miles from the city, and earned a very scanty living by the hardest of toil, but they always came to the services, and in the summer time they often arrived by nine in the morning and remained until five in the afternoon. Once I said to Mrs. Wang, "Don't you get very hungry before you reach home at night?" "No," she replied, " not when I have a meal of rice before I start in the morning." "What!" I said, "are there any times when you are unable to get that?" "Yes. When our rice is gone, and we have no money to get more, we have only the chaff mixed with hot water into a kind of porridge." "How do you manage to walk so far with such poor food?" I asked. "Well," answered Mrs. Wang, "there was one day when I was so faint and tired that I sat down by the roadside and cried. My husband said weeping would do me no good and that we had better get away from the main road, and go behind the hills, where the passersby would not interrupt us in prayer. We did this, and my husband prayed that God would make the hunger of soul more real than the hunger of body. Of course we were not hungry after that. I got up and walked the rest of the way home, prepared a supper of rice husks, and after eating this we went to bed feeling quite happy."

There were rice followers of Christ in Galilee. See the Historical Background.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Alone With God

The Example of Jesus. In all that Jesus consciously does he is our Pattern, but if we imitate him only in that one custom of his of seeking a solitude where he could commune uninterruptedly with his heavenly Father, we should be more like him in all other respects. Reverently we may say that even Jesus could not have borne the storm and stress of his days, the continuous work of teaching and healing, the opposition of foes and the stupidity of friends, could he not have obtained strength through prayer. "In healing the sick virtue went out of him; in solitary communion with his Father virtue flowed into him."

Let us heed his words to his disciples: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile," there to learn the fulfillment of that ancient promise "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." While Jesus lived a life of communion with God, nevertheless he found it necessary to have special seasons when he was alone with him. How presumptuous are they who think they can grow spiritually without these times for meditation and prayer!

Where God is heard. Have you ever stood in the midst of a roaring, rushing stream and noticed how difficult it is to hear anything but the noise of the waters? One summer day I was trout fishing in a wild mountain stream. My companion was our youngest child, a lad of seven. I placed the little fellow on a big boulder in midstream, with his rod, and told him to fish there, while

I went a little farther on. After a while I looked up and he was gesticulating wildly and shouting for me at the top of his voice, but I did not hear a word. The noise of the stream drowned all else.

Is it not thus with us sometimes in the stream of life? God is calling us. He is thundering his appeal to our soul; but we hear nothing but the noise of the waters about us. God must get us out of the roar and tumult, if he would make himself heard. *James I. Vance,* in *Tendency.*

Why Time must be spent Alone with God. In order to make our wills sufficiently strong to take the step between knowing duty and doing duty, this practice of spending time alone with God is indispensable. Our religion is a superhuman religion. God is the source of its life and energy. It is not in man to energize his own will, to take these steps towards Christlikeness and the accomplishment of the will of God. It is they that wait upon the Lord that renew their strength, or better rendered. "They that wait upon the Lord shall change their strength"; that is, they shall change their weakness for the omnipotent might of God. But notice it is they that *wait.* It takes time to effect this transfer. It requires solitude for men to get to the point that they admit their weakness and exercise that grasp of faith that enables them to claim the great energies which God wishes to release in their lives. *Dr. John R. Mott,* in an *Address.*

Have we found Time to be Alone To-day?

Have you and I to-day
Stood silent as with Christ, apart from joy or fear
Of life, to see by faith his face;
To look, if but a moment, at its grace,
And grow, by brief companionship, more true,
More nerved to lead, to dare, to do
For him at any cost? Have we to-day
Found time, in thought, our hand to lay
In his, and thus compare
His will with ours, and wear
The impress of his wish? Be sure
Such contact will endure
Throughout the day; will help us walk erect
Through storm and flood; detect
Within the hidden life, sin's dross, its stain;
Revive a thought of love for him again;
Steady the steps which waver; help us see
The footpath meant for you and me. *Unidentified.*

II BE OF GOOD CHEER; IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID

Our Prayer.

O, Risen Saviour, on life's stormy waters,
We, too, are tossed by waves of doubt and fear;
Like those disciples, we, thy sons and daughters,
Are oft afraid; do thou thyself draw near.

Cheer thou and strengthen; dim the path before us,
The goal we press for hidden from our sight,
Yet, as of yore, shed thy sweet radiance o'er us,
Grant us thy peace, the Holy Spirit's might.

Harriet Julia Evans.

The Source of Courage. Those who have been in a cyclone are not likely to forget the experience. It is a kind of revolving hurricane which sweeps the tropical seas in a circle, and woe betide the ship that is caught in it! I remember being thus caught off the island of Formosa. The wind split our sails into shreds. Birds fell dead upon the decks. Huge seas swept over our vessel smashing the bulwarks like matchwood. But as the providence of God would have it, we somehow got into the very center of the storm-swept circle. There in the very heart of the cyclone we lay becalmed and as quiet as in a land-locked bay. So in the heart of every storm that comes to us on life's troubled sea

we should find Christ. His cheery voice rings through the tempest, saying: "It is I, be not afraid."

A manufacturer took his little daughter to his factory for the first time. The child, terrified by the deafening roar of the machinery all around her, clung to her father, sobbing. "What are you afraid of? Don't you know I am master here?" he said. "Look." And he lifted his finger. In a moment every wheel was still, every sound hushed. When the disciples of Jesus saw his mastery over the seas, they recognised his divinity. *Sunday School Chronicle.*

The Unseen Christ. In an old prison in England, in a close underground cell, a man of refinement was once kept for twenty-four hours. The terrible silence and darkness, peopled by his fancy with hideous shapes, almost paralyzed him with fear. He felt that he was losing his reason. Then he heard footsteps overhead, and the chaplain's voice calling him by name. "I am here," the chaplain said, "and I shall not leave until you are freed." "Oh, I shall not mind it at all, now, with you so near," gratefully answered the prisoner. He could not see his friend, but he knew he was there, and the thought kept him calm throughout the long hours.

Paul and Silas were in a black, stifling inner prison at Philippi. It was midnight, but they were praying and singing hymns unto God. Their backs were cut with blows they had received, and their feet were firmly fastened in blocks of wood, but they were singing happily, for they were aware of the unseen presence of one who said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

The Unavoidable Christ. We can not order our lives so as to be out of the range of Christ's influence, power and presence. Like some snow clad mountain, visible from every part of the plain, so is Christ on the horizon of every man's soul. The sinful soul can not escape from him, but is reminded of his claims in every serious thought that comes into his mind. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Dr. Dawson expresses this truth in his sermon on "The Unavoidable Christ." He says: "You may avoid the church, you may avoid the Bible, and you may avoid the company of Christian people, but you can not avoid Jesus Christ. He will meet you where you least think of him." *The Presbyterian.*

One to whom Christ's Presence is Real. A missionary in Central China after preaching all day in a village rested for the night in the open court of a Chinese inn. With him was an aged Chinese evangelist. After the evening prayer, they rolled themselves up in their blankets side by side. Then the missionary said to his Chinese friend, "Brother Shi, is Jesus real to you?" And the aged man answered "Brother, he is more real to me than you are." "How can that be? You can talk to me and touch me. You cannot hear his voice or touch his form." The old man turned his face toward the missionary and replied in words full of feeling: "My brother, I sometimes misunderstand you, and you sometimes misunderstand me, but Jesus and I never misunderstand each other."

Why should we be Afraid?

Why should we ever shrink or fear,
  Whatever seeming ill befall,
Since he, the all-loving, waiteth near,
  Who sees and understands it all? *Luella Clark.*

III The Miracle

The Possibility of Miracles. What is a miracle? In the simplest sense of the word, a miracle is a wonder, a wonderful thing, that is all. In the restricted sense in which we commonly use the word, a miracle is a departure from the known laws of nature, a startling deviation from the common sequence of events. From this definition two things follow: (1) A miracle is not necessarily a departure from law, but from known law; it is not necessarily an interference with the order of the universe, but the calling in of a higher law. With this view it is possible to define a miracle accurately as "a divine restoration of the true order of nature." (2) The miracle of yesterday in the commonplace of to-day. Had I told a friend fifty years ago that, sitting in my study, I

had that day talked with a man a hundred miles away, or that I had just heard from a friend in mid-ocean, I would have been deemed untruthful, insane or a worker of miracles, but to-day the statement awakens no surprise.

So much for the possibility of miracles. In the presence of the infinite vastness of the phenomena with which he deals, the observer of reverent spirit stands humbled, feels profoundly the limitation of his knowledge, and hesitates to say of any wonderful thing, It could not be. The real question is not, are miracles possible, but, have miracles happened? *Alexander MacColl,* in *A Working Theology.*

The Test of Miracles. In a working theology, the test of the miracles is a very simple one. The miracles that seem to the Christian to be like Christ, outpourings of his love, manifestations of his spirit, he will gratefully accept, and love to read about; those that seem to him unlike the Master, trivial, arbitrary, he will put unhesitatingly from his thought, awaiting upon them the light of a clearer day. The counsel of the old Scotch preacher, "Let us look the difficulty in the face, and pass on," was very wise, a frank recognition of comparative values, a refusal to discredit the sunlight because for the moment some pinhead obstruction blinds the eyes. *Alexander MacColl,* in *A Working Theology.*

Why we are perplexed by the Miracles of Jesus. Kennan, in His Tent Life in Siberia, supplies several anecdotes of the extreme perplexity that our instruments of science cause to the savage mind. "I shall never forget the utter astonishment with which a band of Chookchees once looked through my field-glass. I gave the glass to one of them, and told him to look through it at another native who happened to be standing out on the plain, at a distance of perhaps two hundred yards. The expression of blank, half incredulous surprise which gradually came over his features as he saw that native brought up, apparently within a few feet, was irresistibly comical. He did not dream for a moment that it was a mere optical illusion; he supposed that the wonderful instrument had actually transported the man physically from the distance of two hundred yards up to the place where he stood, and as he held the glass to his eyes with one hand he stretched out the other to try to catch hold of him." As these savages were puzzled by processes and effects which they could not understand, although the whole thing is perfectly clear to us, so are we perplexed by the miracles of our Lord, not because they involved anything unnatural, but because he had a perfect knowledge of laws we have not yet grasped. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson,* in *The Education of the Heart.*

Our Attitude toward the Miracle of Walking on the Sea. I travel into the South Seas, and I meet a man there who has never so much as heard of ice, and I say, "My Southern friend, I walked across a lake one day in February, and never even got my feet wet." And he throws up his hands in amazement, and says, "That is contrary to reason." What he is trying to say is that it is contrary to his experience. When the Evangelist tells me that Jesus walked across a Palestinian lake in April, I have no right to say that it is contrary to my reason, it is contrary to my experience. But my experience is rather a diminutive affair. If I am to cut down Christianity to the dimensions of my experience, I shall not have anything left of surpassing value. The fact is, Christ transcends my experience at every point. What he said runs as far beyond me as what he did. "I do always those things that are pleasing unto him." That is farther beyond me than walking on the water. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." I never could say a thing like that. *Dr. Charles E. Jefferson,* in an address.

The Real Miracle. It would attract more attention if some day the Master would walk on Lake Michigan as on a sidewalk, or quiet its tossing waves by a word. But it will be worth more to truth and to the world if there on the shores of the lake he shall transform the raw human material he gets into the men that he wants. That is the real miracle. As long as that is going on the denial of the supernatural is pure foolishness. *Dr. William Fraser McDowell,* in *The School of Christ.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The things which are temporal are emblems of things eternal. *Pascal.*

Our boat is small and his sea large, yet not so large as his love. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

Well roars the storm to them who hear
A deeper voice across the storm. *Tennyson.*

It is not always true that his presence is the end of dangers and difficulties, but the consciousness of his presence does hush the storm. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

Go, breathe it in the ear
Of all who doubt and fear
And say to them,
"Be of good cheer!" *Longfellow.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Even with Christ on board, Dr. Maclaren notes, life is a stormy voyage; but without him, it ends in shipwreck.

I watch the Master make his way
Far up the mount, at break of day,
'Mid nature's quietude to pray;
And as I seem to see him there
I hear, with all my load of care,
"He calls thee to the mount of prayer."
John R. Clements.

In our lesson story we are told that when upon the mountain Jesus was with his disciples in spirit, for he "saw" that they were distressed in rowing, and went to them. And in his final interview with them, just before his ascension, he made them a wonderful promise. "Lo," he said, "I am with you always," or as the marginal reading translates, "all the days." We may have the help that comes from this assurance.

Our Prayer. Oh our Father, how easily we are disturbed by the unexpected, how quickly we are alarmed in the storm of trouble! Yet we know that thou art our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. May we put aside all fear because we trust in thee.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The place of fear in a Christian's life.
2. Christ's relations with God, with Nature, and with man.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What was the "tradition of the elders" and what were the current views in regard to its importance? (Clipping, page 373.) 2. What is the present practice among orientals as to ceremonial cleansing of hands? (Clipping, p. 374.) 3. What was the usual attitude of Jews towards their parents? (Clipping, page 374.) 4. What did Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount about the guilt of one who broke one of the commandments? (Mt. 5.19.) 5. What was the accusation Jesus made against the Pharisees in Mt. 23.13, 23, 25, 27?

Questions to think about. 1. What does it mean to "walk according to the tradition"? 2. Of what does Jesus accuse the Pharisees in this lesson? 3. Of what did he accuse them in a lesson of the Second Quarter? 4. What is the number of the commandment which Jesus quotes? 5. What does it mean to "honor" father and mother? 6. What are some things that should be included under the verb honor? What one thing especially did Jesus include? 7. How did he interpret and enlarge the meaning of another commandment, as we learned in an earlier lesson? (VII, Second Quarter).

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON II—OCTOBER 13

CLEAN AND UNCLEAN

Golden Text

For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 7.1-13. Clean and Unclean. **T.** Mark 7.14-23. Things that Defile. **W.** Matt. 15.1-9. Precepts that Defile. **T.** Luke 11.14-26. Spirits that Defile. **F.** Acts 10.9-16. Things not Common or Unclean. **S.** Phil. 4.4-9. Thoughts that Cleanse. **S.** 1 Pet. 1.13-23. Blood that Cleanses. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 7.1-23 READ Mt. 15.2-20 COMMIT vv 5, 6

1 And there are gathered together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of
the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, 2 and had seen that some of his
disciples ate their bread with defiled, that is, unwashen hands. 3 (For the
Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not,
holding the tradition of the elders; 4 and *when they come* from the market-
place, except they bathe themselves, they eat not; and many other things there
are, which they have received to hold, washing of cups, and pots, and brasen
vessels.) 5 And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy dis-
ciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled
hands? 6 And he said unto them, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites,
as it is written,

This people honoreth me with their lips,
But their heart is far from me.
7 But in vain do they worship me,
Teaching *as their* doctrines the precepts of men.

8 Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. 9
And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that
ye may keep your traditions. 10 For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy
mother; and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death:
11 but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith
thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given *to God;*
12 ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother; 13 making
void the word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many
such like things ye do.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1-2. *They are gathered.* This is the historical present tense.—*And had seen.* They came from Jerusalem for the express purpose of obtaining evidence which they could use against Jesus.—*Defiled.* Or, *common,* RVm. Ceremonially unclean.—*Unwashed hands.* See Light from Oriental Life.

3-4. These verses are parenthetical, being Mark's explanatory words for the benefit of his Gentile readers who were unacquainted with this custom of the Jews. See page 29 of the Introduction.—*Diligently.* Or, *up to the elbow.* RVm.—*The tradition of the elders.* See page 374.—*The market-place.* Where they would come in contact with people whom they regarded as ceremonially unclean.—*Bathe.* Greek, *baptize.* Some ancient authorities read *sprinkle themselves,* RVm.—*Washings.* Greek, *baptizings,* RVm.—*Brazen vessels.* Many ancient authorities add *and couches* (on which they reclined at meals), RVm. In the brasen vessels the food was cooked.

5-6. *Walk not according to the tradition.* Conduct themselves not in the man-

ner prescribed by the tradition. "Where tradition is once admitted as an authority it rapidly takes precedence. In the Church of Rome the ecclesiastical regulations, *i. e.* the Fasts and Feasts, or the celibacy of the clergy and monastic vows, are enforced with greater severity than the original requirements of the Gospel" (*R. F. Horton*).—*And he said unto them.* In Matthew's Gospel the connection between his answer and their question is made plain by the words: And he answered and said unto them, why do ye also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? They accused him of transgressing the tradition of the elders; he in turn accuses them of transgressing the commandment of God.—*Tradition of the elders.* The precepts of men, verse 7. See page 374.—*As it is written.* Isa. 29.13. "The Saviour does not mean that Isaiah was looking forward to the scribes and Pharisees of the New Testament age: he means that the prophet's utterances depicted these scribes and Pharisees to perfection" (*Calvin*).

9-10. *Full well.* Notice the irony. By *full well* is meant *full ill,* says Richard Baxter.—*Moses said.* See Ex. 20.12; Dt. 5.16; Ex. 21.17; Lev. 20.9.—*Honor.* The next verse shows that under this word Jesus included the duty of supporting parents.—*Die.* Or, *surely die,* RVm.

11. *That wherewith...me.* The money which I might have spent for your welfare.—*Corban.* A Hebrew word meaning "a gift vowed to the sanctuary." See Lev. 1.2.—*Given to God.* The parent's claim is set aside, they say, by an earlier and more sacred claim. See page 374.

12-13. "The rabbis ruled that if an inhuman son thus swore or 'cursed,' he was bound to stand by his 'curse,' because of the holy word *Corban* which he had uttered. And the climax of the satanic quirk was this: the heartless wretch, though vocally vowing by the word *Corban* all his sheep and corn and other possessions to the temple, was not bound after all to give them to the temple; he was only bound, until such time as by some other quirk he could get absolution, to give nothing to the person to whom he had uttered the sacred word" (*Morison*)!—*Void.* Ineffectual.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

7. *In vain do they worship me.* That which he utterly repudiated in the worship of the time was the notion that ritual has an independent value apart from the character and the profit of the worshipper. Worship was supposed to be a tribute which gratified God and accumulated, in his hands, merits credited to the worshipper which would be awarded when the proper time came. So far had this gone that ritual was actually made use of to compound for the neglect of the most obvious moral duties, as in the case of the Corban, by which children relieved themselves from the duty of sustaining their parents through making a payment to the ecclesiastical treasury. Jesus accuses his contemporaries of thus making void the law by their traditions. "And many like things," he added, "ye do." In all ages this has been the error of ecclesiastical life—the idea that worship is intended for the gratification of the Deity, instead of the benefit of the worshipper. The service, on the contrary, with which God is well pleased is the doing of his will; and this consists not in the performance of ritual but in the growth of character. *Dr. James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *The Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not.* The rabbinical law was that the hands should be washed twice before partaking of a meal; "in the first washing the hands were to be held upward that the polluted water might run off at the elbow, and in the second, which 'purified the water of the first washing,' the hands were to be held downward." "The intricate details of the rabinnical ablutions are not worth describing," the One Volume Commentary declares, "but a quotation from the Talmud will show the spirit in which they were performed: 'Whosoever hath his dwelling-place in the land of Israel, and eateth his common food in cleanness (with washed hands), and speaks the holy language (Hebrew), and recites his phylacteries morning and evening, let him be confident that he shall obtain the life of the

world to come.' There was a special devil (Shibta) who was said to torment those who ate with unwashed hands. The penalty was excommunication by the Sanhedrin. Rabbi Eleazar ben Hazar was excommunicated 'because he undervalued the washing of hands,' and dying unreconciled, was carried to the grave with a stone lying on his bier, 'whence you may learn (they say) that the Sanhedrin stones the very coffin of every excommunicate person that dies in his excommunication.'"

Washing the Hands.

At the present time an orthodox Jew scrupulously observes this law, and should he accidentally touch his brow or his hair during the meal, he becomes ceremonially unclean, and must wash his hands again. At the entrance to the synagogues of the Jews there is always a place for washing the hands; the water is not considered "holy," but is there so that no one may have an excuse for entering and engaging in prayer with defiled hands. The Mohammedans observe this practice before praying, and when on the desert at the hour of prayer they wash their hands in the sand, and when they are where neither water nor sand is obtainable they keep the law by going through the motions of washing.

3. *The tradition of the elders.* The Jews had two laws, their written Law, the Pentateuch, and their unwritten law, the "tradition of the elders," which was handed down orally for many centuries. The "elders" were Moses, Joshua, and the prophets, to whom some of the regulations were attributed, but mainly they were scribes. It was finally committed to writing in the two Talmuds, the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud. The Talmud consists of the Mishna, the text, and the Gamara, the comments upon the text. The scribes sometimes held their tradition as of greater authority than the divine law. They had a saying that "the words of the scribes (the Mishna) are lovely, above the words of the Law (the Pentateuch); for the words of the Law are (some) weighty and (some) light, but the words of the scribes are all weighty."

11. *That by which thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban.* The reverence of children towards their parents was carried to the sublime in Hebrew families. The tender care of an aged parent was regarded by every Jew as a sacred duty. The son of Sirach only repeated the sentiment of all Scripture when he said, "Honor thy father with thy whole heart, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother. Remember that thou wast begotten of them; and how canst thou recompense them the things that they have done for thee." That a father's or a mother's blessing was prized as sacred, and its being withheld regarded as the saddest loss, shows how deeply such teaching had sunk into the Jewish mind. *Dr. Geikie,* in *The Life of Christ.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

From the fourth Gospel we learn that on the day after the feeding of the five thousand and the night spent by the disciples on the lake, the crowds went to Capernaum in search of Jesus, and when they found him he spoke to them about the Bread of Life. Many of his followers left him and Jesus sadly asked the twelve, "Would ye also go away?" "Lord, to whom shall we go?" returned Peter, "thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God."

The time and place of the conversation given in our lesson is not distinctly told, but it evidently followed the circuit through Galilee recorded in our last lesson. The Pharisees and scribes had come from Jerusalem to Galilee in search of Jesus, but not because of the signs he did nor because of the loaves and fishes, but because they were intent upon making trouble for him. They

complained because his disciples kept not the ceremonial law, but their complaint was really against their Master, who permitted them to neglect the tradition of the elders.

Jesus' attitude toward the Law we saw in Lessons II and VII of the Second Quarter: now we see his attitude toward the rabbinical tradition about the Law. He shows that the tradition of the elders as to ceremonial cleansing was not binding for two reasons: (1) it was the tradition of men, not the law of God; (2) it gave pretexts for evading the divine Law. And then he explained that real purity is not of the hands but of the heart.

Assign paragraphs 142-145, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

The lesson text must be considerably simplified for your pupils. Tell the story of "Two Kinds of Clean Hands," below. Explain the custom of the Jews in regard to washing the hands before eating, (Light from Oriental Life) and tell how they found fault because Jesus' disciples did not keep up this custom. Jesus told them that this was a law that men had made, not a law given by God, that God's laws were far more important, and yet they failed to keep some of God's laws, one of them being the law about honoring father and mother. Do not attempt to explain how they made the word of God void. Review the ten commandments, and make this fifth commandment your theme, telling the story of Kobi-Asha, page 378.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Tell the mistake that the boy made, "Two Kinds of Clean Hands," below. Stop at the boy's quotation from Job, briefly explain that Job meant that one whose actions are clean and right will grow stronger in his power to resist evil and his ability to do good.

Then tell your pupils that the mistake the boy made was like the mistake that the Pharisees made, who attached so much importance to the washing of hands and so little to the cleansing of hearts. After teaching the lesson, return to the story of the boy and finish it.

For Older Pupils. "Clean face, clean hands, clean heart"—you all know the motto. In some of our mission schools in China the small boys who try to live up to this motto call themselves "The Young People's Clean Society." There was a "Clean Society" in Galilee in the time of Christ, but their motto included only one thing—clean hands.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Outward and Inward Religion

Two Kinds of Clean Hands. There is a story told of a little boy who was observed to do what is rather an astonishing thing for almost any boy to do of his own accord, that is, to go and wash his hands many times a day. He would do it five or six times in the morning and three or four times in the afternoon, and in between while besides—whenever he saw a speck of dirt upon his hands. But friends noticed that he was not nearly so particular about his face. So at last his elder brother asked him what made him wash his hands so often. And this was his answer, "Because I wish to be strong."

"What do you mean?" said his brother. "Do you think that washing your hands will make you strong?"

"Yes," said the little fellow; "I am sure of it. I read it in the Bible."

"Where?" asked the other.

So the little man went and fetched his Bible, and found the Book of Job; then he found the seventeenth chapter, and, putting his finger on the ninth verse, he said, "There you see it says, 'He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger,' and that is why I wash my hands."

His brother could not help smiling at the innocent mistake and then he preached a little sermon. He said that was a bit of Bible picture-talk, a sort of tiny parable; and he told him that there were two kinds of dirt in the world—

one that you could see and another, a worse kind, that you could not. The sort that you could see was made up of such things as mud and ink, and soot and dust; while the other sort was made up of cruelty, dishonesty, idleness, mischief, and the rest. And then he showed how the Bible puts the dirt which we can see just as a picture of these wrong, bad things that stain the soul; and he said that it was not washing the hands with soap and water—though that ought to be done at proper times—which really made them clean, but keeping them away from bad, cruel, mischievous things, and using them in useful work and kindly deeds, that made them look clean and beautiful in the sight of God.

Well, do you know, the little sermon made the boy sleepy, as sermons do sometimes, little boys and little girls too. And so, when the sermon was finished, he went to sleep and had a dream.

He thought he saw an angel standing at the gate of a beautiful garden, and a number of people came up and asked to be let in; and the angel bade them stretch out their hands, and he looked at them—first at one, and then the other. But at most he shook his head, and told them to go away; their hands were not clean.

Then by-and-by a poor old woman came, leaning on a stick, for she could only just walk along very slowly with its help, and she held out her hands, one after the other—poor, old, brown, hard, wrinkled hands they were. But the angel of God said, "Clean hands! beautiful hands!"

And the boy said, "Oh, sir, why?"

"Ah!" said the angel, "those hands, poor, and brown, and wrinkled as they look to you, are beautiful to me. They have nursed little children, and wiped away tears, and bound up wounds, and fed the hungry, and always been used to do kind, gentle, honest things." And then he said again, "Clean hands! beautiful hands! Come into the Lord's garden and rest them now."

And just as she was going in the boy woke up and said, "I know what it means now, and I will ask God to help me to have the real sort of 'clean hands' all my life." *George Critchley,* in *The Legend of the Silver Cup.*

Keeping the Sanctuary Clean. I was in St. Paul's in London a few years ago, when a poor fellow, over in one corner of the Cathedral, shot himself through the heart. The sacred edifice was so defiled by his blood spattered upon its wall, that it was presently re-consecrated with solemn rites. It is hard to understand how such a proceeding could be justified except upon the lowest and narrowest view of the sanctity of the place. There are worse things than the blood of a suicide upon the floor and walls of our sanctuaries. And if there must be reconsecration for every defilement, we must needs be intoning our formulæ and swinging our censers all day long. No, this is not the way to keep the house clean. As well undertake to purify a leper by washing his sandals. No outward garnishing of nave and transept can commend to heaven a company of worshippers whose hands are unclean and whose hearts are impure. *David James Burrell,* in *For Christ's Crown.*

A Hindu's Confession. As do all good Hindus, I bathed daily, but at certain times of the year I with thousands of others flocked to bathe in a tank twelve or fifteen feet square, afterwards to drink of that filthy water, and afterwards to pour some of it before a stone image. All this was for my future good, but after the ceremonies of purification and sacrifice were over, I could lie, cheat or steal, as best suited my purpose.

II Honoring God with the Lips only

A Japanese Legend. There is a Japanese story to the effect that a pious Buddhist died and was told on arrival in heaven that now that he was a citizen of heaven, it would be well for him to look around his new home a little. Kwanon, the goddess of mercy, would be his guide.

He obeyed, and soon the two came to a place where heaps of gold and precious stones blinded the eyes; and to a place where angels' songs delighted the ear, and then to a place where magnificent lotos blossoms bloomed and birds of paradise charmed the ears with sweet music. All this was delightful and easy to understand, but next they came to a room that looked like a shop. Along the walls were shelves on which were piles of what looked like dried mushrooms, and the man asked Kwanon if that was the food of the angels.

She bade him look closer, and he saw that they were really human ears. Then Kwanon explained: "Those are the ears of people who upon the earth went diligently to church and listened to the preaching with pleasure, but whose deeds were so evil that after death they went to hell and only their ears reached heaven."

"But what are those small dried fishes?" the man asked. "Those are human tongues," Kwanon replied. "There are men very skilful in telling others what it is right they should do, and in praising God, but who think so little of what they say that their lives are evil. Of course when they die, only their tongues come to heaven."

In this heathen legend there is a grain of truth concealed for Christians. Who does not recall Jesus' words: This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, but in vain do they worship me. And also his words in an earlier lesson of ours, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. It is not the hearing of God's word, not the naming of Jesus' name, not the honoring with the lips, that makes one a Christian, but the doing of God's will; Christianity rests not with the ears nor with the lips, but abides deep in the heart.

It is a Question of the Heart. It is the life in which God is supreme, which honors God. When Nicodemus came to Jesus he began, with his poor Pharisaic ideas, to boast of the outward, the material. But Jesus stopped him with the assertion that a new birth, a birth into the spiritual life, was necessary before any one could understand the truth. The mere duty of life, of keeping laws and obeying rules, is not sufficient; a machine can be made to do that. It is a question of the heart, of real devotion to the highest and best thought and action; only as a man loves God can he really serve him. Morality is not satisfactory to God. Jesus Christ taught that the Pharisee, who was morally perfect, and the rich young man, who was a straight follower of the Commandments, fell far below the poor, sinful publican who felt his need of God, or the poor fallen woman who loved much because forgiven much. To be spiritual is to live in conscious nearness to God. *Floyd W. Tomkins,* in *Beacons on Life's Voyage.*

A Contrast. "What a brave companion we have got," said Faithful to Christian concerning Talkative, who was always ready to discourse upon religion or any other subject. But Christian knew him better, for he had lived in the same town with him, and he replied: "His house is as empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savor, men that have had any dealings with him say it is better to deal with a Turk than with him."

When Mr. Moody first heard Mr. Sankey leading a revival hymn at a religious convention, he inquired in excitement who he was. A neighbor told him, and praised Sankey's fine voice. "I don't know anything about his fine voice," returned Moody, "but I do know that he feels every word he sings and believes every word he feels."

III Filial Duty

The Teaching of Jesus. In an earlier lesson (VII of Second Quarter) we saw how Jesus interpreted certain of the ten commandments. What did he say the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" included? What is the number of this commandment? Now he interprets the commandment about honoring parents. What is the number of the commandment? What do you think it means to "honor" father and mother? What did Jesus include under that term, as shown in the last verses of the lesson? What other duties does "to honor parents" include?

Jesus accused the Pharisees of teaching that one could free himself from the duty of supporting his parents when in need, by vowing to give to the sanctuary the money which should have been used for them. He plainly places a child's duty to his parents above his duty to his church. How thoughtful he was of his own mother when, suffering on the cross, he commended her to John's care!

Some Filial Duties. Be considerate of your parents. If there are burdens upon stooped shoulders, lift them; if there are aches in hearts that have been

beating for many years, soothe them; if there are tears in eyes that ought only to shine with smiles now that life's work is almost done, dry the tears with sympathetic touch or tender voice; if the years are not so many and the burdens not yet so heavy, cheer your parents at the beginning of the journey, that they may be better strengthened for all that is ahead. *J. Wilbur Chapman,* in *Chapman's Pocket Sermons.*

One who honored his Mother. Annie Louise Berray tells a true story in the *Sunday School Times* from which I condense this incident. Kobi Asha was a Japanese laborer upon a strawberry ranch near Los Angeles. He lived with his mother whom he idolized. He planted wistaria by the door of their cottage and had all sorts of Japanese plants growing in the little garden so that she should not feel homesick.

One day Kobi Asha looked very sad, and the owner of the ranch asked him what was the matter. "Muda seek." "That is too bad. Shall I send a doctor to see her?" "I go ask," he said, and five minutes later reported, "Muda no like Merican docta."

The next day she was worse. "She ver' seek. She want see Chinee docta in Los Angeles," he told the ranch owner.

Los Angeles was six miles away and the trip could be made in fifteen minutes on the electric car, but "She no like him car," Kobi said at the suggestion that he take her there on the electric. "Well, hitch up and take her in the buggy, then." "She no like him buggy." She was just sick enough to be unreasonable. She was afraid of street cars and carriages when she was well, and now that she was ill they seemed more dreadful than ever to her.

"I fix him—I know," Kobi Asha said, after a moment's thought. He went into the house, and you never could guess his plan! Out of the house he came with his mother on his back! "You're not going to carry her all that way!" the ranchman exclaimed, but Kobi only laughed and nodded and started gaily off towards Los Angeles. He carried her the six miles there and the six miles back, and soon she was well and happy again.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Keep thy heart with all diligence;
For out of it are the issues of life. Prov. 4.23.

It is so much easier to bow the head than to cleanse the heart. *F. W. Farrar.*

From within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed...and defile the man. Mk. 7.22, 23.

Take care that your profession does not outrun your possession: artificiality and hypocrisy tear character to shreds eventually. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Life means—learning to abhor the false and love the true. *Browning.*

From the side of the formalist religious life is a mere pretence, to the man of real godliness it is a pure satisfaction, to the eye of God there is in it the promise of eternal life. *W. G. Jordan.*

It is easier for a poor mother to keep seven children than for seven children to keep a poor mother. *Swiss Proverb.*

Suppose
You BE, not
merely SEEM.

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

"Less talk and more walk;
Less wishing and more doing;
Less preaching and more practicing;
Less organization and more life;
Less wheels and more spirit in the machinery;
Less pretence and more genuineness;
Are great requisites in the world of to-day."

Honor thy father and thy mother.
In vain do they worship me with their lips if their heart is far from me.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

Certain Pharisees and scribes had noticed that the disciples were wont to eat food without having first washed their hands, and one day they gathered around Jesus and asked him how it was that they failed to follow the traditions of the elders. For the Pharisees and all strict Jews kept these rules of the elders, that hands must be ceremonially clean before eating, and all regulations as to the washing of cups and pots and brasen vessels and other things.

Jesus answered and said: Fittingly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites when he wrote:

This people honoreth me with their lips,
But their heart is far from me.
But in vain do they worship me,
Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.

You neglect the commandment of God and observe man-made precepts. Wise, is it, to reject the commandment of God in order to keep your own tradition! For while Moses bade one honor his father and his mother, and declared that he who spoke evil of father and mother was worthy of death, you say, that if a man say to his father or mother that the money which might have helped them is *corban, i. e.* vowed to God—you do not let him do anything for his father or mother, and thus you make of no effect the word of God by your traditions, which you hand down, and many similar things you do.

And Jesus then called the multitude to them and declared: There is nothing from without the man that going into him can defile him, but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man. And when he had gone with his disciples into the house they asked him to explain his word to the multitude. "Are ye so without understanding also?" Jesus asked, and then explained that real purity is purity of heart, if the heart is not cleansed, the cleansing of the hands is of no avail.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Filial duty versus religious service.
2. The danger of formalism.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What does the word "Syrophœnician" mean? (Clipping, page 380.) 2. What does Matthew call this woman? (Mt. 15:22.) 3. Were both terms applicable? (Clipping, page 381.) 4. What did the disciples want Jesus to do in regard to the woman and why? (Mt. 15.23.) 5. How are dogs regarded in Palestine? (Clipping, page 382.) 6. What was a centurion? (Dictionary.) 7. What additional information about the centurion is given in Luke?

Questions to think about. 1. Why did Jesus go away from Galilee? (Clipping, page 382.) 2. Celsus in the second century called Jesus' policy of avoiding danger cowardly: how would you answer that criticism? (Clipping, page 380.) 3. Why are the two incidents which did not occur one after the other, given together in our lesson? 4. In what respects are they alike? 5. What did Jesus mean by his words in the 27th verse? 6. What reason can you give for his seeming severity? (Clipping, page 381.) 7. What did the woman's answer prove? (Clipping, page 384.) 8. What words of the nobleman who sought Jesus to have him cure his child, Lesson VII, Third Quarter, show his weak faith as contrasted with the words of the centurion in verse 8, which show his strong faith? 9. What is the force of the centurion's reference to himself in verse 9? (Clipping, page 384.) 10. What is the meaning of v. 11? (Clipping, page 381.) 11. In an earlier lesson Jesus marvelled at great unbelief: what was the occasion? (Lesson VIII, Third Quarter.) 12. What is the missionary teaching of the lesson? (Clipping, page 386.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON III—OCTOBER 20

MISSION TO THE GENTILES

Golden Text

Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John 6.37

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark. 7.24-30. Mission to the Gentiles. **T.** Matt. 8.5-13. Healing a Roman Centurion's Servant. **W.** Acts 10. 34-43. Peter Preaching to Gentiles. **T.** Eph. 2.11-22. Gentiles Become Fellow-citizens. **F.** John 4.39-45. The Saviour of the World. **S.** Matt. 28.16-20. The Great Commission. **S.** Acts 15.1-12. The Gospel among Gentiles. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 7.24-30; Mt. 8.5-13 READ Mt. 15.21-24 COMMIT vv 27, 28

Mk. 24 And from thence he arose, and went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a house, and would have no man know it; and he could not be hid. 25 But straightway a woman, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of him, came and fell down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophœnician by race. And she besought him that he would cast forth the demon out of her daughter. 27 And he said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. 28 But she answered and saith unto him, Yea, Lord; even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. 29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the demon is gone out of thy daughter. 30 And she went away unto her house, and found the child laid upon the bed, and the demon gone out.

Mt. 5 And when he was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 and saying, Lord, my servant lieth in the house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7 And he saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8 And the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. 10 And when Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. 11 And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: 12 but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. 13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And the servant was healed in that hour.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

Mark 7.24-26. *From thence.* From Capernaum.—*Went away.* See the Historical Background. "Celsus (the heathen opponent of Christianity, 170 A. D.) blamed Christ's policy of withdrawal from danger as cowardly. Origen well replied that it was part of Christ's education of the disciples, 'teaching them not at random, or unseasonably, or without sufficient object, to encounter dangers'" (*Dummelow*).—*And Sidon.* Some ancient authorities omit *and Sidon,* RVm.—*Unclean spirit.* See page 300.—*Fell down at his feet.* In homage.—*A Greek.* Or, *Gentile,* RVm.—*A Syrophœnician by race.* That is, a Phœnician of Syria, a descendant of the early inhabitants of the land. She is called in

Matthew a Canaanitish woman, for the coast land here is called both Phœnicia and Canaan.

27-30. *The children.* The Jews.—*First be filled.* "That *first* distinctly says that their prerogative is priority, not monopoly. If there is a first there will follow a second. The fire must have a hearth on which it can be kindled and burn, till it is sufficient to bear being carried thence" (*Maclaren*).—*Meet.* Fitting, proper.—*Bread.* Or, *loaf,* RVm.—*The Dogs.* The word is diminutive, and Tyndale translates it *whelppes.* The Gentiles are meant. See page 384.—*Yea, Lord.* "She catches him in his own words" (*Luther*).—*Even the dogs... crumbs.* See page 382.—*For this saying go thy way.* O woman, great is thy faith, he exclaimed, according to Mt. 15.28. It is as though her faith freed him from the self-imposed limitation of his work to the Jews.—*Let the children first be filled.* He had been trying her faith; as Trench says: "He had shown to her for awhile, like Joseph to his brethren, the aspect of severity; but, like Joseph, he could not maintain it long, or rather he would not maintain it an instant longer than was needful, and after that word of hers, that mighty word of an undoubting faith, it was needful no more."

Mt. 8.5-9. *There came unto him.* According to Luke he did not venture to come himself but sent Jewish elders who told Jesus that he was worthy, Lk. 7.4.—*A centurion.* A Roman officer in command of a century, a company of one hundred men (sometimes but fifty). He had built a synagogue for the Jews at Capernaum, Lk. 7.5, and may have been himself a proselyte. —*Servant.* Or, *boy,* RVm. Who was dear unto him, Lk. 7.2.—*Sick of the palsy.* Paralyzed.—*Grievously tormented.* "Some diseases then classed as paralysis produce violent pain" (*Broadus*).—*Worthy.* Greek *sufficient,* RVm. To enter a Gentile house would render Jesus ceremonially unclean.—*The word.* Greek, *with a word,* RVm.—*I also.* See the interpretation on page 384.—*Under authority.* Some ancient authorities insert *set:* as in Lk. 7.8, RVm. Back of him was the Roman Government.—*I say to this one, Go, and he goeth.* By his own experience he knows the power of "a word"; how much more powerful, he says, must Jesus' word be.

A Centurion.

10-13. *Verily.* Truly.—*I have not found... Israel.* Many ancient authorities read *With no man in Israel have I found so great faith,* RVm. See page 383.—*From the east and the west.* From all parts of the world.—*Sit down.* Greek *recline.* They are at a feast.—*With Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.* Jews would not eat with Gentiles. The Talmud says: In the future world I will spread for you a great table, which the Gentiles will see and be ashamed. Jesus says: The Gentile as well as the great patriarchs shall enter the kingdom.—*The kingdom of heaven.* Here, the future life.—*The sons of the kingdom.* The Jews who thought their birth gave them a right to the kingdom.—*Cast forth into the outer darkness.* Expelled from the bright room where the feast is being held, in the figure used in verse 11.—*Weeping and the gnashing of teeth.* Sorrow and anger.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

24. *He could not be hid.* One thing which deeply impressed the disciples was the impossibility of concealment for their Master. Quietly he has stolen away. No one has been told where he was going. No vision of Messiah stirred these villagers, for they were pagans and outside the covenant. Yet even there Jesus could not be hid—there were hearts which recognized him as the

Christ—and it was that which made so deep a mark on the watchful minds of the disciples. It is very probable that as the years went on that thought would grow in meaning for the twelve. John would recall it on the shores of Patmos; Peter amid the crowds of Babylon. And when they were wearied out with their opposition, or crushed by the might and mockery of heathendom, it would come to them sometimes like cheering music that Christ could not be hid.

And is not the same thing eminently true as we survey the ages till to-day? The verdict of all the centuries is this, that there is that in Jesus which is irrepressible. I have seen a rock cleft into twain, by a seedling birch that rooted in the crannies. A seed had fallen, and the spring had quickened it, and it rent its prison-house and rose in beauty, and so in the ages has it been with Christ. He has been buried out of sight a thousand times, and a thousand times when hope was almost dead, the world has learned that he could not be hid. That is the meaning of the Reformation, when Christ stepped forth again out of the darkness. That is the meaning of every revival, when Christ is uplifted and every eye beholds him. That is the meaning of all social effort, which is so earnest in our land to-day; for it is Christ who is moving in it all, and he cannot be hid. Condensed from *The Return of the Angels,* by *G. H. Morrison.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *My servant.* The Romans were very cruel to their slaves. An exception was Cicero, who possessed several other virtues uncommon in a Roman. He had a devoted slave who had served him many years, and when that slave died Cicero followed his remains to the grave. The people were amazed to see him weeping, and Cicero regretted his show of feeling and apologized for having so far forgotten himself as to weep for a poor slave.

27. *It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs.* Jesus was repeating here a common proverb which to Gentile ears, accustomed to the saying, would not sound as offensive as it does to us. The term "dog of a Gentile," Professor Stapfer tells us, was as common in the first century in Palestine as the term "dog of a Christian" afterwards became. Compare the current Mohammedan expression, "infidel dogs."

Dogs in Palestine are usually gaunt, half-starved, homeless animals that roam the streets at will and act as public scavengers, disposing of any scraps of food and refuse they can find.

Mr. Harry Franck in his account of "Tramping in Palestine," published in the January *Century* of last year, gives this enlightening conversation:

"An American who was in Nazareth long ago," said a native, "told me a strange story. I did not believe him, for it cannot be true. He said that in America people buy dogs!" and the mere suggestion of so ludicrous a transaction sent the assembled group into paroxysms of laughter.

"They do," I replied. The pompous ex-mayor fell into such convulsions of merriment that his rotund face grew the color of burnished copper. "Buy dogs?" roared his sons in a chorus of several languages. "But what for?"

Never having settled that question entirely to my own satisfaction, I parried it with another: "How do you get a dog if you want one?" "W-w-w-why," answered the eldest son, wiping the tears from his eyes, "if anyone wants a dog, he tells some one else, and they give him one. But whoever wants a dog?"

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The hostility of scribes and Pharisees had now become so bitter, and so many of his followers had deserted him that it seemed wise to Jesus to leave Galilee for a time, for a season of rest and fellowship undisturbed by his own countrymen. With his disciples he went northward into the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon, flourishing cities of Phœnicia. This was in the summer of A. D. 29.

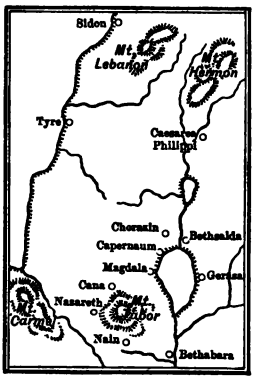
In Matthew's Gospel, the healing of the centurion servant is given immediately after the Sermon on the Mount. It is placed here with the account of the healing of the Syrophœnician woman's daughter because these are the two miracles which Christ wrought for Gentiles. Our lesson title is the "Mis-

sion to the Gentiles." At Tell Hum there are extensive ruins of what must once have been a magnificent synagogue of beautiful white marble, highly carved. Dr. E. W. G. Mastermann says that it may have been standing in the day of our Lord. And even if the greater part of the present structure belongs to an earlier time, it is likely that the site and some, at least, of the masonry go back to the time of Jesus. The centurion, Luke tells us, had built a synagogue for the Jews at Capernaum.

Assign paragraphs 115, 155 and 146-149, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Both these stories will greatly interest your class. Make clear the fact that each of these people who wanted Christ's help were not Jews, who lived in the same country that Jesus did, but Gentiles, who lived in the country north of Galilee. Show Tissot's picture of the centurion, entitled "Lord, I am not worthy," No. 37, and the picture of the "Canaanitish Woman," by Vecchio, Perry No. 3260 or Wilde No. 86. Take up the story of the centurion first, omitting verses 10-12, and then after talking about the mother who wanted her little daughter cured, and after emphasizing the thought of our Golden Text, talk about the little girls and boys to-day in heathen lands who need to know about Christ's great love for them.



SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Robert Moffat, the noted missionary, was once asked to lead the worship in a Boer family. When he suggested that the Kaffir servants should be brought in, the farmer exclaimed, "Oh! let us bring in also the baboons and the dogs!" When Dr. Moffat read the words of the Syro-Phœnician woman: Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table, the farmer called out, "Wait, and I'll bring in all my Kaffirs." "You took a hard hammer, and you have broken a hard heart," the farmer afterwards said to Dr. Moffat.

Who will tell the story which that farmer knew so well and learned to put into practice?

For Older Pupils. Napoleon was one day reviewing his troops at Paris, when he accidentally dropped his reins and the spirited horse at once dashed off. A private soldier down the line sprang forward, seized the reins and checked the horse. "Much obliged to you, Captain," was Napoleon's acknowledgment. "Of what regiment, sire?" was the soldier's quick rejoinder. Napoleon was greatly pleased by his quick wit and ready faith in him, and replied, "Of my guards." The soldier put down his musket and went at once to the officers' tent to await his installation as captain of the guards, which soon took place.

Whose quick wit and ready faith in the greatest of all commanders does this incident recall?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Surprising Faith

The Power of Faith. Faith was in Jesus' view a great force. It could work miracles; uproot mountains; bring about mighty moral changes; it was a necessary condition of his own ability to do miraculous works. Striking manifestations of faith were a great source of delight to him. He remarked upon them; he praised them; he even went so far as to express surprise and admiration on witnessing them.

In his teaching, we find no attempt at a definition of faith. He used the word in the simple, popular sense rooted of Old Testament usage, and took for

granted that the religious instincts of his hearers would help them to understand sufficiently what he meant. But the import of the term as it occurs in the Gospels might be expressed by the single word "receptivity." An open mind receiving the announcements of the kingdom as at once true tidings and good tidings, credible and worthy of all acceptation, such was faith, in the dialect of Jesus.

As thus defined, faith appears a very simple thing, not beyond the capacity of a child. And simple indeed it is, simple as the opening of the mouth to inhale air, or to receive food. Nevertheless faith is not a commonplace virtue. It is a heroic attainment, implying qualities of mind and heart by no means to be found in every man you meet. In the sphere of religion faith is exercised about matters which appeal to the higher nature of man, and which it requires a certain moral elevation to appreciate. Here, too, the things about which faith is conversant are out of the common course. We have to do with the unusual, the unexpected, the improbable, the apparently impossible. The exercise of faith on such objects demands high, rare qualities; power of original thought, imagination, freedom of mind from the bondage of custom, audacity to conceive and expect things out of the beaten track.

If the fact be so, the unreserved admiration of Jesus at signal manifestations of faith becomes intelligible. And that the fact is so we can in part learn from the instances recorded in the Gospels; those, especially, of the Roman centurion, and the Syrophœnician woman.

In the case of the centurion faith reveals itself as a power of conceiving great thoughts, and of dwarfing into insignificance mountains of difficulty. The idea of this soldier is, that just as the hundred men under his command are at his beck to come and go and do as he pleases, so all the powers of nature are ready to do the bidding of Christ. What Jehovah was to David's imagination that Christ the Son of man was to the devout fancy of the Roman soldier—even the emperor of nature, generalissimo of all cosmical forces, capable by a word of making all the laws of the universe and all the elements run his errands. Was it not a great, original idea? But now, observe, it was an idea, the credit of which belonged to the centurion's faith. To conceive it required more than a clever brain, even the daring spirit of which faith alone is capable.

In the woman of Canaan faith again revealed itself as endowed with genius, and as a power of surmounting difficulty. The genius of faith showed itself this time not so much as a faculty of conceiving grand thoughts, but rather as a talent for ready wit. The talent in either case was congruous to the nationality of the person. Great, serious thoughts became the Roman, ready wit the Syrian. The Syrian woman's quick wit showed itself on this wise. To the harsh objection, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs," she replied, "True, Lord, for also the dogs eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their master." She accepts the position assigned to the Pagans, that of dogs, but not of dogs without, of household dogs, taking advantage of the diminutive form of the term employed by Jesus, which was commonly applied to domestic dogs, and so turning his words against himself. "Dogs—so be it, then, let us have the dogs' portion; for they have a portion, the crumbs that fall from the table." It was a happy *jeu d'esprit,* indicative of a natural brightness of mind, and a vivacity of temper that could assert themselves even in the most unpropitious circumstances. But it was more. It was a triumph of faith. Faith gave the heart to utter, if not to conceive, the genial word; faith which could see into the heart of the Stranger and discern his goodness in spite of rough words. But the flash of inspiration, not less than the courage to speak the bright idea, came from faith. The woman could never have hit upon so happy an idea unless she had believed it possible for heaven's grace to reach down to the level of Gentile dogs. Condensed from *The Galilean Gospel,* by *Dr. A. B. Bruce.*

Instances of Great Faith. When Mary Moffat, in the wilds of Africa, received a letter from a friend in England, asking what she wished to have sent them, Robert Moffat and she had been laboring there for ten years and had not been rewarded by a single convert. Yet she wrote bravely back, "Send us a communion service; we shall want it some day." The service reached them three years later, on the day before their first converts were baptized.

In 1887 a few earnest missionary workers met for prayer and petitioned God

for one hundred new missionaries and fifty thousand dollars. As they were talking the matter over before going home, Hudson Taylor said: "Don't you think, before we go, it would be well to thank the Lord for sending us these things? He has surely heard us, and we may not all be able to meet together for prayer again." And then they all knelt once more and poured forth their hearts in gratitude to God for what he was going to do. Before the close of the year, the missionaries and the money had been provided.

II Under Authority

Jesus was under Authority. The centurion says, not that he is a man *with* authority, but that he is a man *under* authority. He says that Jesus, too, is under authority. There is a word in the Greek which the translators in the Authorized Version seem to have looked upon as superfluous. It is the word "also"—for I also (καὶ γὰρ ἐγά) am a man under authority. "I also," he says. Clearly he looked upon Jesus as a Man under authority like himself. Was Jesus under authority? The Rev. W. H. Carnegie, in "Churchmanship and Character," says: When the centurion recognized that Jesus, like himself, was a Man under authority, Jesus saw that he had penetrated to the secret of his life, and turning to them that followed him said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." For this was the secret of Jesus' life. He expressed it at the beginning: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" He expressed it so in the middle: "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." He expressed it so at the end: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." This is the meaning of his presence here upon earth. He came to do the Father's will. He is under authority as a soldier. The soldier's business is to obey his commanding officer. And in his obedience he accepts pain and privation as they come; even death itself; not welcoming them, but not overwhelmed by them. The one impression that is present with him throughout is that he is a man under authority. Jesus was such a soldier. The centurion, not because he was a man in authority, but because he was a man under authority, could say to one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh. For the soldier to whom the command is issued knows that it is not the command of this centurion merely; it is the command of the Roman Emperor. Did the centurion recognize that Jesus himself was Emperor? He could hardly do that. We are told that at the cross another centurion said, "Truly this was the Son of God." Did *he* mean that Jesus was Emperor, the highest Authority in the spiritual realm? Perhaps scarcely even he. Certainly this centurion did not. But he recognized that Jesus was in entire sympathy with that supreme spiritual authority who at a word will send more than twelve legions of angels to execute his desires. Thou, also, he said, art a Man under authority. Thy word is the word of the Highest. Condensed from *The Expository Times.*

The Prince of Wales under Authority. About sixty years ago there was recorded in an English paper this incident about the late King Edward as a child.

Some time ago Miss Hillyard, the governess in the royal family, seeing the Prince of Wales inattentive to his studies, said, "Your Royal Highness is not minding your business: will you be pleased to look at your book and learn your lesson?" His Royal Highness replied that he should not. "Then," said the governess, "I shall put you in the corner." His Royal Highness again said that he should not learn his lesson, neither should he go into any corner, for he was the Prince of Wales; and, as if to show his authority, he kicked his little foot through a pane of glass. Surprised at this act of bold defiance, Miss Hillyard, rising from her seat, said,—"Sir, you must learn your lesson, and if you do not, though you are the Prince of Wales, I shall put you in the corner." However, the threat was of no avail. The defiance was repeated, and that, too, in the same determined manner as before, his Royal Highness breaking another pane of glass. Miss Hillyard, seeing her authority was set at nought, rang the bell, and requested that his Royal Highness Prince Albert might be sent for. Shortly, the Prince arrived, and addressing the Prince of Wales, and pointing to a footstool or ottoman, said, "You will sit there, sir!" His Royal Highness

then went to his own room, and, returning with a Bible in his hand, he said to the Prince of Wales—"Now, I want you to listen to what St. Paul says about people who are under tutors and governors," and having read the passage to him, he added—"It is undoubtedly true that you are the Prince of Wales, and if you conduct yourself with propriety, you may, some day, be a great man—you may be King, in the room of your mother; but now you are only a little boy,—though you are the Prince of Wales, you are only a child, under tutors and governors, who must be obeyed, and must have those placed under them to do as they are bid. Moreover," said his Royal Highness, "I must tell you what Solomon says:" and he read to him the declaration that he who loveth his son chasteneth him betimes (Prov. 13.24); and then, in order to show his love to his child, he chastised him and put him in a corner, saying—"Now, sir, you will stand there until Miss Hillyard gives you leave to come out—and remember that you are under tutors and governors and that they must be obeyed."

The Training of the Tsarevitch. The Tsar of Russia is supposed to be the "Little Father" of his people. The present Tsar's only son, the Tsarevitch, who, it is expected, will some day rule in his father's stead, is receiving a poor training for his position, if newspaper reports are true. It is said that the lad has never been crossed nor punished, that he has not been taught to yield his will to any one, that he has no idea of what it means to be under authority. His father's theory is that by this course the lad will learn that he is an autocrat, born to rule. He only can rightly command who has first learned to obey. "No man is good for anything who has not learned the easy, prompt, cheerful submission of his will to rightful authority."

Every One is under Authority. The universal blunder of this world, Bishop Phillips Brooks declares, is in thinking that there are certain persons put into the world to govern and certain others to obey. Everybody is in this world to govern and everybody to obey.

Every Christian is under divine authority. "We must obey God," bravely Peter answered the high priest who found fault with the apostles for "filling Jerusalem with their teaching." Christians are under the authority of the Great Commander, and they delight to do his will.

III Missionary Topic The Mission to Other Nations

Let the Children first be filled. The Jews did not love other peoples. Jonah did not want to go to preach to the Ninevites, he wanted God to belong exclusively to the Jews, but he learned that God was the loving Father of all mankind; the lesson of the Book of Jonah taken to heart would have changed the Israelites from Pharisees into Missionaries.

Jesus was a Jew when the spirit of Judaism was most narrow and exclusive, but he had no whit of this spirit himself. It was because God so loved "the world" that Jesus lived his earthly life. Yet his mission was first to the Jews. Let the children first be filled, he said to the Syrophœnician woman, but he had passed through Samaria and seeing the fields white already unto harvest, had remained two days and taught those people of mixed Jewish and Gentile blood; he had been driven from Nazareth because he taught that God's mercy extended to the Gentiles; and in the instances recorded in this lesson he exercised his power of healing upon two Gentiles and praised the great faith of Gentiles and declared that many shall come into the kingdom of heaven from the east and from the west.

It was a wise limitation, that of his ministry first of all to the Jews. "It was a case of concentration in order to diffusion," explains Dr. Maclaren. "The fire must be gathered on the hearth, if it is afterwards to warm the chamber. This limitation did not limit his sympathies, nor interfere with his consciousness of being the Saviour and King of the whole world. But he knew that there was an order of development in the kingdom, and that at its then stage the surest way to attain the ultimate universality was rigid limitation of it to the chosen people."

The ultimate universality Jesus proclaimed in his later words: Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations. The very soul of our religion, in the words of Max Müller, is missionary, progressive, world-embracing: it would cease to exist if it disregarded the parting words of its Founder.

A Faith that anticipated Christian Universalism. Among his own countrymen Jesus was thankful to find a faith that was able to believe in his power to benefit even those belonging to the chosen people. He hardly looked for more in a Jew than this homeward bound faith in a grace adequate for Israel's need, but available for none beyond. But on the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he finds a faith of much wider sweep. Here is a woman who comes to him believing that he is able and willing to work marvellous cures, believing that he has wrought many such cures among his own people; but believing, moreover, that his power and his will to help are not limited to Judea, that there is no reason why they should be so limited. Here on this Pagan soil is a faith that anticipates Christian universalism, and makes bold to affirm the great axiom afterwards enunciated by Paul: God is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also. Jesus' ultimate compliance was a virtual proclamation of the great truth that before faith all barriers must go down, that wherever there is recipiency on man's part there is communication of grace on God's part, no matter what the nationality of the believing soul. *Dr. A. B. Bruce,* in *The Galilean Gospel.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The tests of life are to make, not to break us. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Be boundless in thy faith, for not misspent
Is confidence unto the Father lent. *George Macdonald.*

Intelligence is required of some; faith is required of all. *Christina Rossetti.*

Art thou a beggar at God's door? Be sure thou gettest a great bowl, for as thy bowl is, so will be thy mess: "According to thy faith," said he, "be it unto thee." *John Bunyan.*

As the smitten diamond shatters the hammer and anvil, as true gold survives the hottest furnace, so the sincere, honest, trusting heart triumphs over all difficulties, denials, and delays. *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

The world has been divided into four classes—unbelievers, make-believers, half-believers and believers. In which class do you belong?

"Have faith in God; what can there be
For him too hard to do for thee?"

The third Sunday in October in each year has been set aside by the World's Sunday-school Association to be observed by Evangelical Churches everywhere as a Day of Prayer for Sunday-schools throughout the world. Let us unite in this chain of prayer that encircles the globe with faith like unto that of these Gentile petitioners of our lesson, believing that God will hear and answer us even as his Son heard and answered them.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What did Jesus say about dull hearers in Mt. 13. 10-17? 2. What is being done in these days to make the deaf hear? 3. If there is a School for the Deaf near you, learn about its work and methods. 4. On what occasion did Jesus refer to the feeding of the five thousand and of the four thousand? (Mk. 8.19-21.) 5. What does John 6.41-51 say about Jesus the True Bread? 6. (Where was the Decapolis? (Clipping, page 390.)

Questions to think about. 1. What are the unusual features of the first miracle? 2. What was their purpose? (Clipping, page 389.) 3. What reasons can you give why Jesus sometimes wrought his miracles with and sometimes without external means? 4. Why did Jesus sigh? (Clipping, page 389.) 5. Why did he look up to heaven? (Clipping, page 389.) 6. What is the meaning and force of "the bond of his tongue was loosed"? (Clipping, page 389.) 7. Isaiah (42.20) speaks of one whose ears are open, but he heareth not: what does he mean? 8. In what respects are the feeding of the four thousand and of the five thousand alike, and in what different? (Clipping, page 390.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON IV—OCTOBER 27

WANDERINGS IN DECAPOLIS

Golden Text

He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. Mark 7.37

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 7.31-37. Wanderings in Decapolis. **T.** Mark 8.1-10. Feeding Four Thousand. **W.** Matt. 13.10-17. Dull Hearers. **T.** Isa. 42.18-25. Punishment of the Willing Deaf. **F.** 1 John 2.1-11. Walking in Light. **S.** 1 Pet. 2.18-25. In the Footsteps of Jesus. **S.** John 6.41-51. Jesus the True Bread. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 7.31-8.10 READ Mt. 15.32-39 COMMIT vv 34, 35

31 And again he went out from the borders of Tyre, and came through Sidon unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. 32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. 33 And he took him aside from the multitude privately, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat, and touched his tongue; 34 and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35 And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. 36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it. 37 And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

1 In those days, when there was again a great multitude, and they had nothing to eat, he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, 2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: 3 and if I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint on the way; and some of them are come from far. 4 And his disciples answered him, Whence shall one be able to fill these men with bread here in a desert place? 5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. 6 And he commandeth the multitude to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he brake, and gave to his disciples, to set before them; and they set them before the multitude. 7 And they had a few small fishes: and having blessed them, he commanded to set these also before them. 8 And they ate, and were filled: and they took up, of broken pieces that remained over, seven baskets. 9 And they were about four thousand: and he sent them away. 10 And straightway he entered into the boat with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

31-34. *Decapolis.* See the Geographical Background.—*Lay his hand upon him.* That he might be made whole, Mk. 5.23.—*He put his fingers into his ears ...touched his tongue.* By these signs the deaf man learned what Jesus would do. "Christ by these signs would awaken his faith and stir up in him the lively expectation of a blessing" (*Trench*).—*Spat.* "How could the man's tongue obtain its normal flexibility? By nothing in the man's own nature, by nothing that would be naturally medicinal, but by a higher power. It was to be by the fiat of Jesus. But Jesus could not tell the man in words; the man was deaf. Hence he benevolently acted. It is on this action of our Saviour that Roman Catholics found their custom of touching with 'spittle' the ears and nostrils of the person to be baptized, whether adult or infant" (*Morrison*).—*Looking up*

to heaven. In the spirit of prayer. Compare Mt. 14.19; Jn. 11.41, 42.—*Sighed.* Touched with a feeling of man's infirmities.—*Ephphatha.* An Aramaic word.

36. *He charged them.* Those who brought the man, v. 32.—*All things.* Evidently other miracles were wrought at this time, Mt. 15.30, 31.

1-8. *In those days.* While still in the region northeast of the Sea of Galilee. —*Bread.* Greek, *loaves,* RVm.—*Baskets.* See below.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

34. *Looking up to heaven.* We are fully warranted in supposing that that wistful gaze to heaven means, and may be taken to symbolise, our Lord's conscious direction of thought and spirit to God as he wrought his work of mercy. There are two distinctions to be noted between his communion with God and ours before we can apply the lesson to ourselves. His heavenward look was not the renewal of interrupted fellowship, but rather, as a man standing firmly on firm rock may yet lift his foot to plant it again where it was before, and settle himself in his attitude before he strikes with all his might; so we may say Christ fixes himself where he always stood, and grasps anew the hand that he always held, before he does the deed of power. The communion that had never been broken was renewed; how much more the need that in our work for God the renewal of the—alas! too sadly sundered—fellowship should ever precede and always accompany our efforts! And again, Christ's fellowship was with the Father, while ours must be with the Father through the Son. The communion to which we are called is with Jesus Christ, in whom we find God. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

34. *He sighed.* If we look to our Great Example we shall see that even he was forced to sigh for the sad world of sin and death; but notice that the sigh had scarcely been uttered when once more he was engaged in works of mercy and thoughtful care. To sigh is sometimes natural; but to waste time in sighing, to suffer ourselves to be wholly absorbed in the dark side of life, to exclude ourselves from its many and simple gladnesses, is unthankful and useless. *F. W. Farrar.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

33. *He spat, and touched his tongue.* Dr. Edersheim says that the use of saliva was universally recognized by the rabbis as useful in cures, and that "Jesus used a means of healing accepted in the popular opinion of Jew and Gentile." Jesus used it, of course, merely to let the deaf-mute know what he could not hear if said in words, that he was to receive hearing and speech.

35. *The bond of his tongue was loosed.* Most commentators have lightly pronounced "bond of his tongue" to be a "figurative" expression, without realizing the technical peculiarity and therewith the point of the "figure." But running through all antiquity we find the idea that a man can be "bond" or "fettered" by dæmonic influences. It occurs in Greek, Syrian, Hebrew, Mandæan and Indian magic spells. ... There are no less than thirty Attic tablets published by Richard Wünsch which bind or curse the tongue. And in the Louvre at Paris there is this much later Mandæan inscription on a magician's dish:

Bound and fast held be the mouth and fast held the tongue of curses, of vows, of invocations of the gods...Bound be the tongue in its mouth, fast held be its lips, shaken, fettered, and banned the teeth, and stopped the ears of curses and invocations.

It seems probable that St. Mark's "bond of the tongue" is also a technical expression. The writer will not merely say that a dumb man was made to speak—he will add further that the dæmonic fetters were broken, a work of Satan undone. It is one of those thoroughly popular touches which helped Christianity to make its way in the world. *Professor Adolf Deissmann,* in *Light from The Ancient East.*

8.7. *A few small fishes.* See page 350.

8. *Seven baskets.* Two different Greek words are used for "baskets" in the accounts of the Feeding of the Five Thousand and of the Four Thousand. In the former, in all four Gospels, the Greek word κόφινοι is used, which means a basket, or wallet, slung from the shoulders, in which the Jew carried his food

when traveling, that he might avoid eating food prepared by others which might be "unclean" according to Jewish regulations. Because of this custom, the Romans called the Jews "basket-carriers." The Greek word used in both Matthew and Mark, who narrate the Feeding of the Four Thousand, is σπυρίδες which means a much larger basket than the one carried on a journey, a hamper, as we should call it. It was in such a basket that Saul was let down over the wall of Damascus. Acts 9.25.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To-day's lesson follows chronologically the cure of the Syro-phœnician woman's daughter, last lesson.

Because of the similarity of the miracles of the feeding of the Four Thousand and of the Five Thousand, some scholars think they are different reports of the same event, but in Mark 8.19-21 Jesus refers to them as occurring on distinct occasions. The number fed differs—in the first case five thousand and in the second, four thousand; the amount of food used as the basis differs—in the first, five loaves and two fishes; in the second, seven loaves and a few small fishes; and the amount of broken pieces remaining differs—in the first, twelve smaller baskets full; in the second, seven large baskets full.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The Sea of Galilee was Jesus' objective point on leaving the neighborhood of Tyre; he went southward to Sidon, and from there he probably followed the great road which led across the grand highlands of northern Galilee, over the Libanus and Antilibanus mountains, possibly on to Damascus, and then went southward to the eastern coast of the Sea of Galilee. The Decapolis, "through the midst of whose borders" he passed, is the name given to ten cities and their territories, chief among them being Damascus, Gadara, Hippo, Pella, Scythopolis.

The Feeding of the Four Thousand took place somewhere on the southeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The location of Dalmanutha is not known; it is thought by some scholars to have been the modern El Delher-miyeh, a mile north of the mouth of the Yarmuk.

Assign paragraphs 170 and 150-161, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Show your pupils Tissot's picture of "Jesus Healing the Blind and Lame," No. 26, and talk about Jesus' great sympathy for the afflicted, as shown in earlier lessons, especially Lessons X and XI, First Quarter, and Lesson XII of Third Quarter. After teaching the first incident in to-day's lesson, tell the dream about the Ghost of Jesus Christ, page 391, and then talk about the way Christians to-day are carrying on Christ's work as far as they can. Give an interesting account of a School for the Deaf, and tell your pupils about Helen Keller. If you have time for the second incident of the lesson, merely say that after making this deaf and dumb man hear and speak, Jesus again showed his sympathy, this time for hungry people as he had done once before, and let your pupils tell the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, studied five weeks ago.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Yesterday a young lady came to see me who was a deaf-mute when a little girl. She was born without the power to hear, and because she could not hear she could not speak, though she could make strange, disagreeable sounds. And yet we easily talked together a long time, for though she still cannot hear a word she understood everything I said, and though she speaks very queerly, I understood her. Was not that a miracle? She has been taught to understand others by watching their lips, so she really "hears with her eyes," and she has been taught to speak by putting her hands upon others and learning the different motions made for different sounds and words. It is wonderful that a deaf-mute to-day can learn to understand and to be under-

stood. It was wonderful that in the times we are studying a deaf-mute could be made to hear with his ears and speak in a natural way. Who did this wonderful thing? What do we call this wonderful deed of Jesus?

For Older Pupils. Call for the answer and general discussion of questions one and two, "Questions to Look Up" assigned last week. Speak about the wonderful way in which the blind deaf-mute, Helen Keller, was taught to "hear" and speak. Make your pupils see the divine hand in these marvelous things that are being done to-day even as they see it in the marvelous cure wrought by Christ upon the deaf-mute in the Decapolis.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I EPHPHATHA

Christ's Miracles were also Parables. Christ's miracles were "signs," tokens of his divine power over material things, and also symbols, indicative of his divine power over spiritual things. His giving hearing and speech to the deaf-mute was a sign and a symbol: as a sign it aroused in the multitude amazement, and they said: He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. As a symbol it foreshadowed the giving to dense minds the power to hear and heed his words. This result of his transforming touch Susan Coolidge finely expresses—

The lives which seem so poor, so low,
  The hearts which are so cramped and dull,
The baffled hopes, the impulse slow,
Thou takest, touchest all, and lo!
  They blossom to the beautiful.

The disciple of Buddha, Professor Borden P. Bowne reminds us, looks forward to unknown ages of entanglement with an evil past, but Jesus Christ undertakes to free men from the law of sin and death: he alone can speak the word of deathless hope and almighty power to the morally lame and deaf and dumb and blind of our race.

How Spiritual Ears are Opened. If the difference is in people, so that one hears it thunder and another hears an angel's voice, what have I to do with it all? I am what I am. How can I be held responsible? The whole problem is solved by the word *attention.* It is attention that makes the difference between seeing and looking, between hearing and listening. Seeing plus attention equals looking. Hearing plus attention equals listening. What you see and hear may be wholly out of your control now, but not so with your looking and listening. Moral responsibility and moral power meet in your will. You may hear the voice of temptation, but resolve to listen to the voice of God. To what will you listen? You can decide: it will affect your hearing. The men who heard it thunder could not help it that day. But if they discovered that others heard angels' voices (John 12.29), if they said, "Why can not I?" if they began to look for God, began to listen for angels, some day glimpses came to them of God—some day heavenly music blessed them. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

A Talk about Continuing Christ's Miracles.

Uncle. On an island where the people are Christians of a sort, though they have some curious beliefs, they told me a strange tale about the ghost of Jesus Christ. According to them the Lord could not be happy in heaven, because he was so sorry for the poor and sorrowful and sinful on the earth, so he left his glorious body in some secret chamber, and came as a disembodied spirit to continue his work of healing, and comforting, and saving his human brothers and sisters.

Edith. But why leave his body? Did the people say?

Uncle. I suppose they would say that it might dazzle men's eyes, and only set them staring and wondering to no purpose. But he could no longer put his fingers on blind eyes, or touch a leper, or speak a word that men could hear. So he was obliged to try to use the hands and tongues of mortals to do his merciful deeds and speak his wonderful words.

Tom. How could he do that? Oh, I think I understand. Something like wireless telegraphy or brain waves.

Uncle. I can't tell you how they believed it was done, but whenever a man spoke wisely and helpfully to others, or did some brave, kind action, they said, "The Beautiful Ghost has visited him," or "The Beatiful Ghost has put it into his heart."

Edith. But it isn't true—is it, uncle?

Uncle. Something very like it is true, if I rightly understand what Jesus meant when he said: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." When we talk of the Holy Ghost and the Spirit of Christ, don't we mean very much the same as my friends who spoke of the Beautiful Ghost of Jesus? If we remembered that every right thought and good feeling came into our minds from him, we should have more courage to put them into practice, and if we remembered also that the Spirit of Christ must work through human hands and speak to men through human lips, and desires to have our hands and voices, I think we should not greatly need to puzzle our brains as to the meaning of the Beautiful Ghost.

Edith. Thank you, uncle. I shall think of the Beautiful Ghost often and often. *J. A. Hamilton,* in *The Wonderful River.*

II The Cost of Feeling

The Cost to Christ. All these instances of true human feeling, like his tears at the grave of Lazarus, and his weariness as he sat on the well, and his tired sleep in the stern of the little fishing-boat, and his hunger and his thirst, are very precious as aids in realising his perfect manhood; but they have a worth beyond even that. They show us how the manifold ills and evils of man's fate and conduct appealed to the only pure heart that ever beat, and how quickly and warmly it, by reason of its purity, throbbed in sympathy with all the woe. One might have thought that in the present case the consciousness that his help was so near would have been sufficient to repress the sigh. One might have thought that the heavenward look would have stayed the tears. But neither the happiness of active benevolence, nor the knowledge of immediate cure, nor the glories above flooding his vision, could lift the burden from his laboring breast. And surely in this, too, we may discern a law for all our efforts, that their worth shall be in proportion to the expense of feeling at which they are done. Men predict the harvest in Egypt by the height which the river marks on the gauge of the inundation. So many feet there represent so much fertility. Tell me the depth of a Christian man's compassion, and I will tell you the measure of his fruitfulness. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

Pity is meant to impel to help. Let us not be content with painting sad and true pictures of men's woes,—of the gloomy hopelessness of idolatry, for instance—but let us remember that every time our compassion is stirred, and no action ensues, our hearts are in some measure indurated, and the sincerity of our religion in some degree impaired. White-robed Pity is meant to guide the strong powers of practical help to their work. She is to them as eyes to go before them and point their tasks. They are to her as hands to execute her gentle will. Let us see to it that we rend them not apart; for idle pity is unblessed and fruitless as a sigh cast into the fragrant air, and unpitying work is more unblessed and fruitless still. Let us remember, too, that Christ-like and indispensable as Pity is, she is second, and not first. Let us take heed that we preserve that order in our own minds, and in our endeavors to stimulate one another. For if we reverse it, we shall surely find the fountains of compassion drying up long before the wide stretches of thirsty land are watered, and the enterprises which we have sought to carry on by appealing to a secondary motive, languishing when there is most need for vigor. Here is the true sequence which must be observed in our missionary and evangelistic work, "looking up to heaven, he sighed." *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

Her Good Intentions. Sunday, April 12.—That was really a great sermon on Missions that our pastor preached this morning! I never realized before that I am personally responsible for some of the darkness of heathen lands, or that my few dimes and prayers, and my interest, may be like the loaves and fishes that were blessed by Jesus to the feeding of five thousand. The pastor told us about a Bible woman in India whom a few poor factory girls in this

country supported at thirty dollars a year. She was the means of the conversion of a Hindu young man who became a preacher and has brought hundreds to Christ. Oh, it just thrills me to think of being the means of saving even one soul! "Will there be any stars in my crown?" Well, at least I will try to go to our monthly missionary meeting from this time forward. I am so glad I am interested.

May 17. Dear me! This is the day for our Woman's Foreign Missionary Society meeting, and I declare if I hadn't forgotten it, and now it is half-past four o'clock! Something says to me, did I ever forget my club? Well, I'll go next month sure.

June 15. What a pity it rains to-day! Of course I cannot go to the missionary meeting in this storm. But I'm not responsible for the weather, that's certain. There's the 'phone. Hello! Why, yes, Molly, I'll run down. No, it won't put me out one bit. You know I have a new silk rubber-lined storm coat and high overshoes. I'll be there in half an hour. Good-by! Oh, dear, there's that Voice again! Yes, Molly does live two blocks beyond the church, but—I'll go next month to the meeting. *Elizabeth Cheney,* in *Woman's Missionary Friend.*

III Missionary Topic Some Missionary Lessons

Lessons from the Pattern of Service. The "missionary spirit" is but one aspect of the Christian spirit. We shall only strengthen the former as we invigorate the latter. Harm has been done, both to ourselves and to that great cause, by seeking to stimulate compassion and efforts for heathen lands by the use of other excitements, which have tended to vitiate even the emotions they have aroused, and are apt to fail us when we need them most. It may therefore be profitable if we turn to Christ's own manner of working, and his own emotions in his merciful deeds, set forth in this remarkable narrative, as containing lessons for us in our missionary and evangelistic work.

Those minute details which this Evangelist ever delights to give of our Lord's gestures, words, looks, and emotions, not only add graphic force to the narrative but are precious glimpses into the very heart of Christ. That fixed gaze into heaven, that groan which neither the glories seen above nor the conscious power to heal could stifle, that most gentle touch, as if removing material obstacles from the deaf ears, and moistening the stiff tongue that it might move more freely in the parched mouth, that word of authority which could not be wanting even when his working seemed likest a servant's, do surely carry large lessons for us—the condition of all service, the cost of feeling at which our work must be done, the need that the helpers should identify themselves with the sufferers, and the victorious power of Christ's word over all deaf ears.

Christ's touch is his willing contact with man's infirmities and sins, that he may strengthen and hallow. And the lesson is one of universal application. Wherever men would help their fellows, this is a prime requisite, that the would-be helper should come down to the level of those whom he desires to aid.

It is of no use to stand at the mouth of the alleys we wish to cleanse, with our skirts daintily gathered about us, and smelling-bottle in hand to preach homilies on the virtues of cleanliness. We must go in among the filth, and handle it, if we want to have it cleared away. The degraded must feel that we do not shrink from them, or we shall do them no good. The leper, shunned by all, and ashamed of himself because everybody loathes him, hungers in his hovel for the grasp of a hand that does not care for defilement, if it can bring cleansing. Even in regard to common material helps the principle holds good. We are too apt to cast our doles to the poor like bones to a dog, and then to wonder at what we are pleased to think men's ingratitude. A benefit may be so conferred as to hurt more than a blow; and we cannot be surprised if so-called charity which is given with contempt and a sense of superiority, should be received with a scowl, and chafe a man's spirit like a fetter. Such gifts bless neither him who gives nor him who takes. We must put our hearts into them, if we would win hearts by them.

The effect of much well-meant Christian effort is simply to irritate. People

are very quick to catch delicate intonations which reveal a secret sense, "how much better, wiser, more devout I am than these people!" and wherever a trace of that appears in our work, the good of it is apt to be marred.

We cannot lecture men into the love of Christ. We can win them to it only by showing Christ's love to them; and not the least important element in that process is the exhibition of our own love. Condensed from *The Gospel of St. Mark,* by *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

Adaptation of Methods. This deaf-mute Jesus treated differently from most other persons whom he healed. His action seems to have been adapted in each case to the mental state of the person healed. One he healed by word, another by a word and a deed combined; one in the presence of the multitude, another where there were none to listen. Whatever would arouse the expectancy of the afflicted person, whatever would be to him provocative of faith, Jesus condescended to use, thus accommodating himself to that one's mental attitude.

So missionaries have found that they must adapt their methods to the people with whom they have to deal. A good example of this is given by Mr. Egerton R. Young in "The Battle of the Bears:"

"Say, Missionary," said the chief to me one day, "there are some pagan Indians over at the fort, and they told me to tell you that they would come over and hear you preach three times on Sunday, if you would give them one big meal of your new potatoes."

"All right, David," I replied, "tell them to come and they shall have a square meal of potatoes."

Come they did. And although they had never been in church before, they listened attentively to all my sermons that day, and I did all I could to pack as much of the gospel as possible into my addresses. Of course they got my potatoes, and it would have done you good to see how they enjoyed them and the quantity they ate!

We speedily became great friends, and the men and their families, with whom we thus became first acquainted in this queer way, afterwards became good, earnest Christians.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Oh! self-denying love, which felt alone
For needs of others—never for its own. *R. C. Trench.*

Pity is meant to impel to help. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The fact that I hear voices to which I do not respond is not so great a thing to me as the fact that there must be voices just beyond those that I do not hear and that I might hear if only my ear were keen enough to catch them. *Robert E. Speer.*

His ears are open, but he heareth not. Isa. 42.20.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Mt. 11.15.

If it were not for the heavenward look, how could we bear the sight of earth? *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

Our spiritual powers are like bulbs which are ours as the gifts of God's grace, but in multitudes of lives they remain like bulbs in the florist's window, unopened and unrevealed. *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

On the subject of Christ I have much to say, declares the writer of the Hebrews, but it is difficult to explain it to you because you are become dull of hearing. Are we slow to learn, too, because through failure to attend and heed we are becoming dull of hearing? Open thou our eyes, heavenly Father, that we may see thy goodness and love and care. Open thou our ears that we may hear thy messages to us.

"There is but one way to help those who need help: to stand at their side, and get hold of their hand, and look into their eyes with the unaffected good-will that will move them to say—Here is one who has an interest in me, and is going to try his best to do me good. The touch is the secret of the cure."

THE LESSON TRANSLATED INTO MODERN ENGLISH

On returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went, by way of Sidon, to the Sea of Galilee, across the district of the Ten Towns. Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and almost dumb, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him. Jesus took him aside from the crowd quietly, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with saliva. Then, looking up to Heaven, he sighed, and said to the man: "Ephphatha!" which means "Be opened." The man's ears were opened, the string of his tongue was freed, and he began to talk plainly. Jesus insisted upon their not telling any one; but the more he insisted, the more perseveringly they made it known, and a profound impression was made upon the people.

"He has done everything well!" they exclaimed. "He makes even the deaf hear and the dumb speak!"

About that time, when there was again a great crowd of people who had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him, and said: "My heart is moved at the sight of all these people, for they have already been with me three days and they have nothing to eat; and if I send them away to their homes hungry, they will break down on the way; and some of them have come a long distance."

"Where will it be possible," his disciples answered, "to get sufficient bread for these people in this lonely place?"

"How many loaves have you?" he asked.

"Seven," they answered.

Jesus told the crowd to sit down upon the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, and, after saying the thanksgiving, brake them, and gave them to his disciples to serve out; and they served them out to the crowd. They had also a few small fish; and, after he had said the blessing, he told the disciples to serve out these as well. The people had sufficient to eat, and they picked up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left. There were about four thousand people. Then Jesus dismissed them. Immediately afterwards, getting into the boat with his disciples, Jesus went to the district of Dalmanutha . *The Twentieth Century New Testament.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. He doeth all things well.
2. Modern help for deaf-mutes.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. What was the first time that Jesus was asked for a "sign" in proof of his power? (Lesson VIII, First Quarter.) 2. What was the last time that he was asked for such a sign? (Mt. 27.40-42.) 3. To what disciple and why did Jesus say, "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me?" (Jn. 14.9.) 4. What addition is given by Matthew in connection with the words of verse 12? (Mt. 16.4.) 5. Was blindness common in Palestine? (Clipping, page 398.) 6. In what other case of curing blindness did Jesus make use of saliva? (Jn. 9.1-12.)

Questions to think about. 1. How were the Pharisees "trying" Jesus by asking for a sign? 2. Why could no sign be given? (Clipping, page 399.) 3. Why was the question of the Pharisees insulting? (Clipping, page 397.) 4. What explanation had the Pharisees given of Jesus' power to work miracles, recorded in an earlier lesson? 5. What had Jesus said on that occasion? 6. 6. Of what was Jesus thinking when he charged his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees? (Clipping, page 397.) 7. Why were the Pharisees in his thoughts? 8. In what earlier lesson did Jesus speak about the dullness of understanding of his disciples? (Lesson II, Third Quarter.) 9. In what earlier lesson did he speak about their failure to remember? (Lesson I of this Quarter.) 10. What did the blind man mean by saying that he beheld men as trees, walking? Was this true to nature? (Clipping, page 397.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON V—NOVEMBER 3

THE SIGN AND THE LEAVEN

Golden Text

Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8.12

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 8.11-26. The Sign and the Leaven. **T.** Matt. 16.1-4. Reading the Signs. **W.** John 6.26-33. Jesus the True Sign. **T.** John 9.24-33. Discernment by Opened Eyes. **F.** Mark 10.35-45. Leaven of Ambition. **S.** Matt. 23.23-31. Leaven of Hypocrisy. **S.** Job 28.12-28. True Wisdom and Understanding. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 8.11-26 READ Mt. 16.1-12 COMMIT vv 14, 15

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking
of him a sign from heaven, trying him. 12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit,
and saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign? verily I say unto you, There
shall no sign be given unto this generation. 13 And he left them and again
entering into *the boat* departed to the other side.
14 And they forgot to take bread; and they had not in the boat with them
more than one loaf. 15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of
the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. 16 And they reasoned
one with another, saying, We have no bread. 17 And Jesus perceiving it saith
unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? do ye not yet perceive,
neither understand? have ye your heart hardened? 18 Having eyes, see ye not?
and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? 19 When I brake the
five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces
took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20 And when the seven among the
four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces took ye up? And they
say unto him, Seven. 21 And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand?
22 And they come unto Bethsaida. And they bring to him a blind man, and
beseech him to touch him. 23 And he took hold of the blind man by the hand,
and brought him out of the village; and when he had spit upon his eyes, and
laid his hands upon him, he asked him, Seest thou aught? 24 And he looked
up, and said, I see men: for I behold *them* as trees, walking. 25 Then again
he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked stedfastly, and was restored,
and saw all things clearly. 26 And he sent him away to his home, saying, Do
not even enter into the village.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

11-13. *A sign from heaven.* The Jews expected that special signs would attest the Messiah.—*Trying him.* If the sign were not forthcoming, they would regard it as proving him a false Messiah.—*Why doth this generation seek a sign?* Jesus speaks as if to himself.—*There shall no sign be given.* It is conjectured that Mark omits "the sign of the prophet Jonah," given by Matthew 16.4, because his Gentile readers would not understand it.—*The other side.* Of the Sea of Galilee.

14-15. *They.* The disciples.—*The leaven of the Pharisees.* The sourdough of Pharisees, Wycliffe's Version. The teaching of the Pharisees, Mt. 16.12. "Hypocrisy, ostentation, pride, formalism, scrupulosity and the tendency to place the letter before the spirit."—*And the leaven of Herod.* Of the "Herodians." Of the Sadducees, says Mt. 16.6. The leaven of the Herodians and Sadducees was "worldliness, and the temper of irreligious skepticism."

16. *We have no bread.* Or, *It is because we have no bread,* RVm. The disciples are literalists, they think their Master is telling them to be on their guard against obtaining bread made from the leaven of such people. "So taken up were they with this petty trouble that they twisted the Master's words as they fell from his lips, and thought that he was rebuking them for what they were rebuking themselves for (their forgetfulness, verse 14). So apt are we to interpret others' sayings by the thoughts uppermost in our own minds" (*Maclaren*).

17-21. *Do ye not yet perceive.* The disciples were strangely obtuse, unable to see the spiritual meaning of the miracles. Compare his question put to Philip, John 14.9.—*Baskets. Basket* in verses 19 and 20 represents different Greek words, RVm. See page 389.—*Do ye not yet understand?* Matthew adds, 16.12; Then understood they that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

24. *I behold them as trees, walking.* They were indistinct to his vision, like trees, yet they were moving about. "Medical testimony agrees with the process here described. Cheselden says of a patient of his who, having been born blind, recovered his sight, 'When he first saw, he knew not the shape of anything, nor any one thing from another, however different in shape or magnitude.'" (*Dummelow*).

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

11. *Seeking of him a sign from heaven.* We might gather from its source as coming from the Pharisees that this seeking had a malicious purpose, to undermine the authority of the new Teacher with the people by asking from him what he could not, or would not, perform. But from the historical connection in which the Evangelists place it, the purpose was not only malicious but most insulting. Our Lord had in the pursuit of his beneficent healing ministry cured suffering men; and the Pharisees' explanation was that he had power from an evil source. He did it, they asserted, by virtue of his connection with Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And now after this explanation of the signs and wonders Jesus did among men, they come with the insulting request for a sign. What sort of sign did they want, and what sort of evidence could convince them, if they could attribute his healing ministry to a diabolic origin? The veiled insult of the demand is the supercilious passing over of all he had been and done as if it did not count, and as if he must now do something of sufficient magnitude to convince them that his pretensions were trustworthy. *Hugh Black,* in *Christ's Service of Love.*

15. *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.* A recent book of travel says that in one of the Continental art galleries there is a picture which, viewed only from a distance, seems to be a representation of clouds. Examined more closely, however, the apparent clouds dissolve into angels. There is much more in the picture than the causal, distant spectator might imagine. Looked at closely and intently the fleecy nebulosity arranges itself into the heavenly forms of cherubim and seraphim. The picture may be taken as an illustration of Christ's words and deeds. There is more in them than a casual hearer or onlooker might imagine. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," he says to his disciples in the boat. And they think it is because they have brought no bread. But he spake of the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. There was a mystic meaning in his words. So his parables. They were earthly stories with heavenly meanings; pictures of clouds which resolved themselves into angels. *Herbert Windross,* in *The Christian World Pulpit.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

12. *There shall no sign be given.* Christ's disciples doubtless knew the Jewish traditions of the Bath Kol, the daughter of the voice, according to which certain of their most pious and learned rabbis, when hard pressed by their opponents in arguments, had appealed to the judgment of heaven and had been indorsed by a mysterious voice or echo sounding from the sky. His disciples might interpret his refusal of the test as an acknowledgment of defeat, and the Pharisees would certainly do their best to have the people see it in that

light. But Jesus never submitted his cause to trial by ordeal. He let the matter pass for the moment with only an answer to the Pharisees. But in the quiet of the sail across the lake, taking for his text the disciples' discussion about bread, he discoursed to them on the danger of the Pharisaic influence, and pointed out that he who had so miraculously multiplied the loaves and fishes on two previous occasions as an act of mercy needed no sign from heaven to attest his divine mission. The leaven of the Pharisees doubtless continued its pernicious work among the masses, but the disciples were saved. *A. Walker,* in *The Biblical World.*

22. *A blind man.* Blindness is far more common in eastern countries than it is with us. Dr. Geikie says that while in northern Europe only one out of a thousand persons is blind, in Egypt there is one blind in every hundred, and he attributes it largely to inflammation arising from the great changes in temperature between day and night. Perhaps there is no land where blindness is so common as in Palestine. Water is scarce in many districts and cleanliness is wanting. Dirt and flies aggravate eye diseases. Travelers often speak of seeing flies settled undisturbed on the sore eyelids of children. Even eye diseases that are easily curable often lead to blindness because of neglect and of the prejudice which exists against reliable remedies, for the people much prefer to use incantations.

23. *When he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands upon him.* It was popularly believed that saliva and clay would cure weak eyes, but not that they would affect the eyes of one born blind. A cure for blindness is reported by Professor Adolf Deissmann, in "Light from the Ancient East." Inscribed on a marble tablet some time after A. D. 138, probably at the temple of Asclepius on the island in the Tiber at Rome, is this record of a cure: To Valerius Aper, a blind soldier, the god revealed that he should go and take the blood of a white cock, together with honey, and rub them into an eyesalve and anoint his eyes three days. And he received his sight and came and gave thanks publicly to the god.

In other cases of healing the blind, Jesus did not use saliva, save in that reported in John 9.1-12. He used it here to help the faith of the blind man. "It is easier to believe, when means can be perceived; it is still easier, when the means seem appropriate."

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Our lesson immediately follows that of last Sunday. After the feeding of the four thousand, Jesus and his disciples entered a boat and went to the neighborhood of Dalmanutha, (Magadan, Mt. 16.39) whose location on the Sea of Galilee is unknown. There the Pharisees demanded from Jesus a sign. Leaving them, Jesus and his company started for the other side of the lake and on the way the conversation took place between him and his disciples. On reaching Bethsaida (see page 341) he gave sight to the blind man.

Assign paragraphs 152 and 162-169, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

The substance of verses 11-13 you can tell quickly and simply. Show Tissot's picture No. 50, "Pharisees and Sadducees come to tempt Jesus." Begin with questions about the temptation of Jesus, especially the "sign" of casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple to prove that he is the Son of God. Talk about his miracles as deeds of kindness to others, never done for himself, about his refusal to work a miracle when the Pharisees demanded it, then take up the miracle told about in verses 22-26. Show Bida's "Christ healing the Blind Man," Perry 3271, or Theotocopule's picture, Wilde No. 115. Omit verses 14-21, for your pupils will not readily understand them, but in your teaching about the giving of sight to the blind man tell what Jesus said to his disciples in verse 18. Teach the Third Topic. Call for the sixth Beatitude and for this stanza—

"We have two eyes to look to God,
Two ears to hear his Word,
Two feet to walk his ways,
One mouth to sing his praise,

Two hands to do his will,
One heart to love him still;
Take them, dear Jesus, and let them be
Always obedient and true to thee."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger and Older Pupils. Begin with the Sign of Our Lady of Guadalupe, below, and then contrast with such a legend Christ's attitude towards the demand for a sign that should prove his credentials, and impress the fact that from the nature of the case no sign could be given (President Rufus M. Jones' words below.) Ask for answers to questions 1 and 2, "Questions to look up," p. 395, thus recalling the first and the last times in Jesus' life when he refused to prove his power by "signs from heaven."

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Seeking a Sign

The Sign of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Two miles and a half from the City of Mexico is the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, one of the most famous shrines in the world. Pilgrimages are constantly made to it by Mexicans and many miracles of healing have taken place here, so they declare. Over a beautiful while marble altar, finely carved, I have seen the frame which holds the sacred *tilma,* of which this is the story. One morning in December, 1531, an Indian named Juan Diego was walking near the hill of Guadalupe when there appeared to him a beautiful lady who said: "Know, my son, that I am the Virgin Mary, Mother of the true God. My will is that a temple should be built on this spot, where you and all your race will always be able to find me and seek my aid in your troubles. Go to the Bishop and tell him." Juan sought the bishop, who refused to believe him, but finally said he would if brought a "sure sign." When Juan saw the lady again she agreed to give him a sign that would win him full credit. She told him to go to the top of the hill and fill his *tilma* (the coarse, apron-like garment that hung from his neck) with roses, and carry them to the Bishop. It was a barren hill where roses never grew, but he obeyed and found the most beautiful roses bloming miraculously there. When he reached the Bishop and opened his *tilma,* the flowers fell to the ground, and on his *tilma* was seen miraculously painted the image of the Virgin. The Bishop accepted the sign and ordered a chapel built. The present church is the fourth one that has stood upon the hill.

This legend is generally believed by Catholics throughout Mexico. In 1663 the Pope decreed that the 12th of December should forever be the festival of the Mexican Virgin, and by the bull of May 25, 1754, the miracle was sanctioned and confirmed by the Pope. Emperor Iturbide in 1822 created the "Order of the Virgin of Guadalupe" as the highest decoration, and Presidents Guerrero, Alvarez and Comonfort and also Emperor Maximilian made solemn, official pilgrimages to this sanctuary. The peons of Mexico believe that this Virgin is their only protector, and this is the prayer they offer at her shrine: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, save us from the wrath of Christ."

As welcome as a breath of purest mountain air after tarrying in a close dungeon are the words of Christ to the Pharisees who sought from him a "sign," after our consideration of this Mexican legend.

There shall No Sign be given. In fact, from the nature of the case, no sign could be given. Spiritual truth must be taken at first-hand or not at all. No physical sign could be given to prove, or authenticate, Christ's message of divine love, of forgiveness of sin, of Sonship with God, or the possibility of a life hid with Christ in God.

This power to transform a life, and bring it into divine relation, is the supreme sign; it is the only sign by which Christ could attest his spiritual message. Simon, the wavering, fickle, impetous fisherman, changed to Peter, the apostle of Christ, is a sign; John, the son of thunder, wishing to call down fire on the Samaritans, transformed into the apostle of love, is a sign; Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, haling men and women to prison, changed

to Paul with his life hid with Christ in God, who, also "crucified with Christ," can say in truth, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," is a sign. Every soul since, which through Christ has turned from its prodigal life and cried, "Abba, Father," has found Christ's truth true, and has become a sign to others. No other sign shall be given to this or any other generation.

Each generation in its own way asks for a sign. Crowds gather around the spirit-realistic "medium" to get a material "sign" that the spirit lives after death, but not thus shall the great truth of immortality be proved. One generation expects the astronomer with his telescope to find an indisputable sign in the starry heavens; another asks the geologist to dig up one from the strata of the earth's crust, or the biologist to find a sign in the cells of the living forms.

God is love, let us remember, and he can be found only where love can be, and the sign must be sought in a human heart that can feel and test a spiritual truth. This is the meaning of Tennyson's great lines in "In Memoriam," written when his own heart was yearning for a sign that God is love and that life goes on. He says:

I found him not in world or sun,
  In eagle's wing or insect's eye;
  Nor thro' the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith hath fallen asleep
  I heard a voice, "Believe no more"
  And heard an ever-breaking shore
That trembled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt
  The freezing reason's colder part,
  And like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, "I HAVE FELT."

The first-hand knowledge, by experience, is the only all-sufficient attestation of a spiritual truth, and however much we may long for tests through our senses, and for signs that are tangible, we must at last get where we can receive his Beatitude, "Blessed are they that have not yet seen, yet have believed," and cry out, because our hearts know him, "My Lord and my God." Condensed from a chapter in *Practical Christianity,* by *President Rufus M. Jones.*

II Dull Minds and Memories

Slow of Understanding. Says Ruskin, Every duty we omit obscures some truth we might have known. Says Christ, Every truth we might have known and don't, obscures some other truth we might have grasped.

In our first lesson from the parables the disciples asked Jesus to explain to them the parable of the Sower, or of the Seed in four Kinds of Soil. Know ye not this parable? and how shall ye know all the parables? Jesus returned. It was a simple parable, and the disciples having fellowshipped so many months with their Master might have been expected to understand it without an explanation. How could he teach them deeper truths, if this truth was too deep for them?

In our first lesson of this quarter again we saw how dull of understanding the disciples were. They were greatly troubled when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and supposed him to be a ghost, and when he entered their boat and the wind ceased they were amazed, for, Mark adds, they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened. Had they grasped the significance of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, they would have been prepared for any manifestation whatsoever of his power. And now, in this lesson, we see how deeply moved is Jesus by this added proof of their continued dullness of apprehension. His wrought up spirit is shown in his rapid fire of questions.

There is no other instance that I can recall in the whole Gospels, with the exception of Gethsemane, where our Lord's words seem to indicate such agita-

tion of the windless sea of his spirit as this rapid succession of rebuking interrogations, well does Dr. Alexander Maclaren observe. They give a glimpse into the depths of his mind, showing us what he generally kept sacredly shut up, and let us see how deeply he was touched and pained by the slowness of apprehension of his servants. I do not think we half enough realize how large an element in the sorrows of the Man of Sorrows, and of the grief with which he was acquainted, was his necessary association with people who, he felt, did not in the least degree understand him, however truly, blindly, and almost animally, they might love him. It was his disciples' misconception that stung him most. If I might so say, he calculated upon being misunderstood by Pharisees and outsiders, but that those followers who had been gathered round him all these months, and had been the subjects of his sedulous toil, should blurt out such words as these about their lack of bread, cut deep into that loving heart.

Do ye not remember? They could not profit by a wonderful past. They seemed not able to use their eyes and their ears. His nine consecutive questions about the miracles and the loaves showed how accurately he remembered all. He could recall the smallest details; the varying numbers of the people that were fed, the varying numbers of the loaves and fishes; the two different kinds of baskets; and the different number of baskets, proportioned to their size. No detail had faded from his recollection. Why should all have made so small an impression upon them? Why, above all, should they imagine that he was always troubling himself about the small earthly matters that troubled them? Would they never rise to his level of concern, to his absorption with great spiritual realities, instead of living so far down among merely material ones? And again, would they never come to see that to him the inward was infinitely more than the outward? that what he looked chiefly at was not the washing of the hands but the cleansing of the soul? "Are ye also yet without understanding as to this?" he says. Was their unworldly, heavenly-minded Master a complete enigma to them still, after all these months?

But am I so very different from these disciples? Does he find no blind eye or deaf ear—no dulness of memory and understanding in me? For many long years he has been showing me the wonders of his love, and I see them not. He has been speaking to me with many a voice—sometimes sternly, sometimes encouragingly, sometimes warningly, always lovingly; and I hear him not. When I am disheartened, I forget his power, and I forget my own experience of his power, and I am worried and troubled, as if I had never known what it was to have him supplying all my need. It is because I "do not remember" that I sin; because I "do not remember" that I fear. Each new emergency lands me in new perplexity, because I "don't remember." This is my great failing too. Must I not be grieving and disappointing my Master just as these disciples did? *G. H. Knight,* in *The Master's Questions to His Disciples.*

Days should speak, Job 32.7 The happenings of yesterday are to be my tutors in the life of to-day. I am to "ask of the days that have been" and let the divine goings of the past determine the ways of the present. *Dr. J. H. Jowett,* in an *Address.*

III Eyes That See Not

Shutting the Eyelids of the Mind. Did you ever think what wonderful things your eyelids are—these two little drop-curtains hung above your eyes, that can be raised and lowered so quickly? They are wonderful because they are so little and yet can shut out so much.

Look at the ocean from the top of a mountain and see it stretch so far and wide it may take a day for a sail to creep from right to left of you; yet drop those curtains of the eyes, and you blot it out. Look at a great library full of books, a storehouse of the wisdom of the world. It would take you a lifetime to explore those treasures; but shut your eyes and you need never see a page. Look at a crowd of people struggling with their lives, working, suffering, learning, sinning, dying, yet shut your eyes and you need not see one. Oh! weird little curtains of the eye, so small yet shutting out such mighty things. The spirit of not caring is the shutting of the mind's eye from the things you do not want to see: great truths of God; great needs of humanity; great opportunities of doing good. The spirit of selfishness says: "It is easier not to see

those things," and so you shut your eyes, and you don't see them. And out of sight, out of mind. Who cares? It is easy to get rid of all these things and to see the things it pays you to see. *Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall,* in *The Silver Cup.*

Why Some Lives are Dark. Have you ever noticed that some fishermen keep their minnows, which they use for bait, in cans that have been painted white, and have you ever wondered why they do this? Their minnows are light in color and can be readily seen by the fish which the fishermen wish to have swallow them and be caught on their lines. If the minnows were kept in dark cans they would soon have a darker tinge, and would not be so plainly seen. Minnows all alike have been caught and some of them put into a white bowl full of water and others of them into water in a black iron kettle, and after being kept half a day, away from the direct sunlight, the contents of each vessel have been poured into a third and it has been found that the minnows from the white bowl were already considerably lighter than those from the black kettle. Minnows, you see, change their color according to the degree of light to which they are exposed. If they were blind, their color would not change at all.

Do you not see in what way we are like those minnows? If we have eyes and see not, if we have closed "the eyelids of our minds," so that we do not see Jesus, the Light of the World, then we are in darkness and our lives are dark, but if we live in the sunlight of his presence our lives glow with his light. I am the light of the World, said Jesus: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.

How Eyesight may be lost. Have you ever heard of people who have eyes that see not? "Oh, yes," you say, "I know, children who were born blind."

No, I do not mean that at all. Some boys and girls have their eyes wide open to story books, fairy tales—wide open to tennis, cycling—wide open to their pets; but they have never seen God yet. Never! Let me tell you what I mean, in this way.

There are some very magnificent caves in Kentucky. Mammoth caves they are called because of their vast size. Great lakes are in the caverns. Most curious fish live in the waters. It is all dark there, yet these fish seem to have eyes—very beautiful eyes. But they cannot see. Why? Because there is nothing behind the eyes to tell the creatures what they are looking at.

When you go to the seaside you will look, I dare say, through the telescope at the large steamers far out at sea, almost hidden, sometimes, in the thick haze. The telescope will not see anything, will it? "Of course not," you say. "Telescopes can't see!" Very well. You will see through the telescope. It is just the same with those fish in the caves. Their eyes are like the telescope. But what is called the nerve, the thing that looks through the eye and tells the mind what the eye sees, is gone from every one of them.

How is that? Simply because they have not used that nerve. They had good eyes once. But when they went into those dark caves the little nerve had nothing to do. So it withered, and withered away, and the fish became stone-blind.

It is something like that with boys and girls. In every child's soul there is what I may call the nerve of faith, by which you can see God, and if that power is not exercised it will wither away, and you will not be able to see God at all. But you can see God now by making use of the nerve of faith. Faith looks through your soul and sees God.

God paints the flowers. His fingers pack the grain in the ears of corn. He gives the rose and violet their sweet color and perfume; he puts the soft bloom on the peach. Faith believes it, sees God's handiwork in it all.

And whenever you want to see God very clearly, open your New Testament, and read this: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." So that whenever you see Jesus you will see God.

I would be so sorry if your faith were to wither until you could not see God anywhere. Let it never be said of you: "Eyes have they, but they see not." *J. Woodhouse,* in *The Christian.*

The Greater Blessing. In a school for the blind in this country one of the teachers is a blind Chinese girl, who rather than repining over her great misfortune, counts it a blessing. "If God, designing my blindness, has increased

my power for good, why should I not glory in my blindness?" she questions. "I would a thousand times rather be blind and useful than to have lived all my life in China and remained in spiritual darkness."

SENTENCE SERMONS

How do I know he's the Christ of God?
I was blind, and men trampled on me;
"Have pity!" I cried; and he touched my eyes—
"Be opened," he said; and I see! *Robert J. Burdette.*

No one so deaf as he who will not hear!
No one so blind as he who will not see! *Longfellow.*

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold
Wondrous things out of thy law. Ps. 119.18.

Though the eyes be sealed against sun and moon, he is not blind who sees Christ. *Christina Rossetti.*

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Mt. 6.8.

If we would give sight to the blind we must ourselves be gazing into heaven. *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Do we who are disciples of Christ understand our Master even yet? Must he not often wonder at our dullness?

The sun is known by the brightness of his beams; no one who has seen both daylight and sunlight can mistake the moon for the sun, or the sun for the moon. Even so, simply looking at Jesus, and walking in the light of his teaching, we discern him to be the great luminary of the spiritual world. *Dr. A. B. Bruce.*

As there are blind beggars in the East who would on no account have their sight restored and be forced to give up begging and earn their own living, so there are those in our land who are content to be spiritually blind rather than be troubled by the sense of duty to others which would come with their spiritual sight.

Said Mutesa, King of Uganda, Africa, to Mr. Stanley: Stamlee, say to the white people when you write them, that I am like a man sitting in darkness or born blind, and that all I ask is that I may be taught how to see, and I shall continue a Christian while I live. It is our duty to help carry on Christ's work of giving spiritual sight to the heathen who sit in darkness: are we doing it?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. "Twice-Born Men," the signs of Jesus' power.
2. Modern miracles wrought for the blind.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. Who was Hosea? 2. In what century did he live, and what other prophets belonged to the same century? (8th century: Amos, Isaiah.) 3. What lesson did we have last year from the Book of Hosea? 4. What is the finest verse in Hosea, the one twice quoted by Jesus? (6.6.) 5. What is the historical background of the lesson? (Clipping, page 406.)

Questions to think about. 1. What is the last clause of the preceding chapter, and what is its connection with our lesson? (Clipping, page 406.) 2. What does Ephraim stand for? (Northern Kingdom of Israel.) 3. What is the meaning of "Now have their own doings beset them about"? 4. What is the meaning of "he stretched out his hand"? 5. What is the meaning of the figure of speech in verse 4? (Clipping, page 405.) 6. In verse 6? 7. In verse 8? (Clipping, page 408.) 8. In verse 9? 9. In verse 11? (Clipping, page 405.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON VI—NOVEMBER 10

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY

Golden Text

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them! Isa. 5.11

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Hos. 7.1-16. Wickedness of the Wicked. **T.** Dan. 1.8-20. Control of Appetite. **W.** Eph. 5.1-12. Control of Speech. **T.** 1 Pet. 4.1-11. Control of Pleasures. **F.** 1 Kings 21.1-11. Uncontrolled Ambition. **S.** Rom. 14.13-23. Control of Conduct. **S.** 1 Cor. 8.1-13. Abstinence for the Sake of Others. *Int., S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Hosea 7

1 When I would heal Israel, then is the iniquity of Ephraim uncovered, and the wickedness of Samaria; for they commit falsehood, and the thief entereth in, and the troop of robbers ravageth without. 2. And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now have their own doings beset them about; they are before my face. 3 They make the king glad with their wickedness and the princes with their lies. 4 They are all adulterers; they are as an oven heated by the baker; he ceaseth to stir *the fire,* from the kneading of the dough, until it be leavened. 5 On the day of our king the princes made themselves sick with the heat of wine: he stretched out his hand with scoffers. 6 For they have made ready their heart like an oven, while they lie in wait: their baker sleepeth all the night: in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire. 7 They are all hot as an oven, and devour their judges; all their kings are fallen: there is none among them that calleth unto me.

8 Ephraim, he mixeth himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake not turned. 9 Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth *it* not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth *it* not. 10 And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: yet they have not returned unto Jehovah their God, nor sought him, for all this. 11 And Ephraim is like a silly dove, without understanding: they call unto Egypt, they go to Assyria. 12 When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the birds of the heavens: I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard. 13 Woe unto them! for they have wandered from me; destruction unto them! for they have trespassed against me: though I would redeem them, yet they have spoken lies against me. 14 And they have not cried unto me with their heart, but they howl upon their beds: they assemble themselves for grain and new wine; they rebel against me. 15 Though I have taught and strengthened their arms, yet do they devise mischief against me. 16 They return, but not to *him that is* on high; they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. There is close connection between this verse and the last one of chapter 6. See the Historical Background. God is represented as speaking.—*Ephraim.* This is the name of the Northern Kingdom of Israel; Judah, the name of the Southern Kingdom.—*Ravageth.* Or, *maketh a raid,* RVm.

2. *Now have their own doings beset them about.* Compare Prov. 5.22. Their evil-doings condemn them.

3. "We suppose we are in the reign of Zechariah, a witness of his revels, and of his murder at the hands of Shallum (2 K. 15.8-12); the fourth generation of the house of Jehu brings the dynasty to an end, and the succession of phan-

tom kings begins with which the Northern Kingdom comes to an end" (*Horton*).

4. *They are even as an oven...leavened.* As the baker, after heating his oven, leaves it, knowing that it will retain its heat without his stirring the fire while the kneaded dough is being leavened, so the passions of Ephraim are so hot that they need no further incitement.

5. *On the day of our King.* On the occasion of a royal festivity.—*Themselves.* Or, *him,* RVm.—*He stretched out his hand.* Was hospitable.

6. *Made ready.* Hebrew, *brought near,* RVm.—*While they lie in wait.* "This introduces the new idea of the conspiracy: Shallum is in the background nursing his murderous plan until the morning" (*Horton*).—*In the morning.* "It would appear that Hosea has in mind the assassination of the king at a feast, or just after a feast, in the early morning.

7. "Whatever definite event the prophet has in his mind, this describes the general character of the northern kingdom, a restless disloyalty to kings and rulers. The only dynasties of any duration were those of Omri and Jehu."—*Calleth unto me.* Worship Jehovah.

8. *Mixeth himself among the peoples.* "It is a great crisis for any nation to pass from the seclusion of its youth and become a factor in the main history of the world. But for Israel the crisis was trebly great. In the time of his outgoings Ephraim was not sure of himself nor true to his God, the one secret and strength of the national distinctiveness. So he met the world weak and unformed, and, instead of impressing it, was by it dissipated and confused. Ephraim wastes and confuses himself among the Gentiles" (*George Adam Smith*).—A cake not turned. Spoilt, one side burnt, the other uncooked. Compare our term *half-baked.* See page 408.

9. *Strangers have devoured his strength.* Tribute has to be paid other nations with whom the northern kingdom allied itself for help. Moreover, as Dr. G. A. Smith explains, Ephraim has senselessly congratulated himself upon the increase of his trade and wealth arising from his mixing himself among other nations, and he fails to perceive that these have sucked from him all his distinctive virtues.—*Gray hairs.* Signs of old age, of waning strength. "Gray hairs are thy passing bell" (*Pusey*).—*Here and there.* Hebrew, *sprinkled.* RVm.

10. *Pride,* Or, *excellency,* RVm. "He is so besotted with pride that he recognizes neither the evil itself nor its true remedy" (*Dummelow*).

11. *Like a silly dove.* Turning first to Egypt, then to Assyria, for help, as we learned in our lessons of last year. Dr. Horton quotes here the Eastern saying that "There is nothing more simple than a dove." Poor pigeon of a people, exclaims Dr. Smith, fluttering from one refuge to another!—*Understanding.* Hebrew, *heart,* RVm.

12. The metaphor of the dove is followed by that of the fowler: God will punish them for their silly turning to other nations for help.—*As their congregation hath heard.* Through Hosea's earlier warnings. Another reading is given in the margin: *When the report cometh to their congregation.*

14. *Assemble themselves.* "Meet in religious exercises."—*Beds.* "The divans used in the heathen worship" (*Horton.*). "No real repentance theirs, but some fear of drought and miscarriage of the harvests, a sensual and servile sorrow in which they wallow. They seek God with no heart, no true appreciation of what he is, but use the senseless means by which the heathen invoke their gods." (*George Adam Smith*).

15-16. *Taught. Chastened them,* RVm.—*Not to him that is on high.* To false gods. Notice the number of words that are supplied here in the English translation. "The Hebrew has but three words," says Dr. Horton, and he quotes Pusey's suggestion—"They turn, not most High—the hearer readily filled up the broken sentence, which fell, drop by drop, from the prophet's choked heart." —*They are like a deceitful bow.* They are seemingly praying to a higher power, but their arrow is not rightly aimed.—*For the rage of their tongue.* "To this allusion we have no knowledge."—*In the land of Egypt.* Where they had fondly hoped to find aid, there they shall find scorn.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

13. *They have wandered from me.*

But the bitterest of the ills beneath
Whose load man totters down to death,
Is that which plucks the regal crown
Of freedom from his forehead down,
And snatches from his powerless hand,
The sceptered sign of self-command,
Effacing with the chain and rod
The image and the seal of God;
Till from his nature, day by day,
The manly virtues fall away,
And leave him naked, blind, and mute,
The godlike merging in the brute! *Whittier.*

14. *They assemble themselves for new wine.* Do not seek the stimulus of life primarily through the senses, but through the heart. The fundamental need of life is not a sensation, but an inspiration. It is folly to seek to spur the essential powers of life by a stimulus to the flesh. If a man wants buoyancy, power to contend with a "sea of troubles" and keep his head above the water; if he would be light-hearted, and have power to resist the awful, pressing weight of urgent care; if he would be optimistic, with reason that can pierce the near and frowning horizon, and realize the golden morrow beyond, the secret must be sought, not in the highways of the body, but in the deep recesses of the soul. The real stimulus of life; what is it? What is it that reaches and quickens the innermost man? The inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Wine may excite a nerve; the Holy Spirit inspires and stimulates the life. Be not drunken with wine, but be filled with the spirit. *Dr. J. H. Jowett,* in *The Folly of Unbelief.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

8. *Ephraim is a cake not turned.* See page 408.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Hosea is one of the prophets about whom we studied last year. He lived, you remember, in the eighth century B. C., the time of the decline and fall of the Northern Kingdom (Ephraim), and he has much to say about the impending doom. The people must inevitably be punished in order to be brought to a better life, a truer faith. You recall our last lesson from his prophecy, from the 14th chapter, in which he begs Israel to repent and return—O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God—and assures them of God's love—I will be as a dew unto Israel—he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. Here in the 7th Chapter Hosea is painting the moral and political condition of Israel. The last verse of chapter 6 belongs with this lesson: O Judah, there is a harvest appointed for thee, when I bring back the captivity of my people. God desired to bring back his people, but— their sins prevented this.

As Dr. George Adam Smith says, It is an obscure passage upon obscure events; yet so lurid with the passion of that fevered people in the flagrant years 743-735 B. C. that we can make out the kind of crimes described—a king surrounded by loose and unscrupulous nobles; adultery, drunkenness, conspiracies, assassinations; every man striking out for himself; none appealing to God.

Assign paragraphs 170-173, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Let the Golden Text to-day be your theme, without any reference to the selection from Hosea, which is too difficult for your pupils. Explain that this is World's Temperance Sunday. Talk about temperance in eating as well as in drinking. The following extracts from "Good Health" and "Emergencies," in the "Gulick Hygiene Series" will interest and instruct your class.

Did you ever hear of beautiful, drunken butterflies? In South America there

is a certain tree from the flowers of which a sweet juice trickles, and hosts of butterflies use this juice for food. Unfortunately, however, while it is still on the tree, it sours and ferments. Now butterflies do not seem to be quite bright enough to know that they take great risks when they use this juice after it is sour. In fact, they are so ignorant that they run their long tongues into the flowers and suck it up as merrily as ever. Then they feel queer, and stagger, and act as some men do on the sidewalks late at night. They cannot fly, they act half-witted, and when their enemy, the bird, comes they are helpless and cannot get away.

Dr. Hodge was asked to find out whether alcohol does human beings any harm in certain directions. He was sure that the quickest and best way to go to work was to press various cats and dogs into this useful service, for he knew, as we do, that things that are unwholesome for animals are usually unwholesome for people, and that food which nourishes animals will generally nourish men too; that is, poison that kills a dog will kill a man, and food that fattens a dog will probably fatten a man.

In this particular case Dr. Hodge secured the help of several young kittens. He picked out two that were happy and healthy, and tried to make them take milk that had a little alcohol in it. But the kittens would not touch it; they acted as if they would rather starve first.

He therefore opened their mouths very carefully and fed the milk to them, a little at a time. It did not please them, but they swallowed it. Dr. Hodge did this regularly for ten days, and day by day he noticed how it affected the kittens. They stopped playing, did not grow, and did not keep their fur clean and smooth as healthy kittens always do. They did not even care for mice, or feel the slightest interest in any dog. Indeed, they seemed to be dull and indifferent to everything.

Finally, they were actually ill, and by this time Dr. Hodge concluded that they had taught him at least one great lesson. They had proved that alcohol prevents kittens from growing and robs them of their energy. Accordingly, he stopped giving the stuff to them.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When a caterpillar fastens itself to some board or hides itself in the ground and spins its own shroud, what do we call it then? When its shroud bursts in due time, what has it become? Does every caterpillar become a butterfly? It sometimes happens, (as Mr. John A. Hamilton tells us in "The Wonderful River") that a caterpillar goes on eating and growing and casting off skin after skin, and at last spins its shroud and passes into the chrysalis form, but never rises to the better life in the air. What is the reason? One day, when the caterpillar was busy devouring a leaf, a dark fly hovered over it, and thrust what we may call its sting into its body, and deposited a tiny egg there. Out of the egg came a tiny grub, which at once began to feed on the forming butterfly part. It did no harm to the skin and muscles of the caterpillar, but ate only its soul. So the caterpillar felt no pain, and did not know that there was anything amiss, but went on feeding and growing and at length prepared for the change that would never come. The grub consumed its soul. It is a dreadful parable. We may be attacked by evil thoughts, by sins, which seem to do us no great harm because they produce no pain to our bodies, and do not hinder us from "getting on" in the world. But all the while they may be eating away the soul.

You remember that many of our lessons last year about the Kingdom of Israel and Judah before they were taken and the people carried into captivity, showed that the very life of the nation was being devoured by sins of idolatry and drunkenness and many others. To-day being the World's Temperance Sunday, we turn back to the Old Testament for our text, and we find it in one of the prophets who warned the people over and over that if they did not reform, if they did not turn back repentant, to God, they should be punished.

For Older Pupils. Joseph Parker, in a sermon in the City Temple Pulpit, has this to say about the impossibility of adequately expressing in language the holiness of holiness: There language dies, there the instrument is broken, for it cannot tell the music. In the Bible, language is often sorely put to it. There are many unfinished sentences as well as unfinished thoughts in the Bible. Here

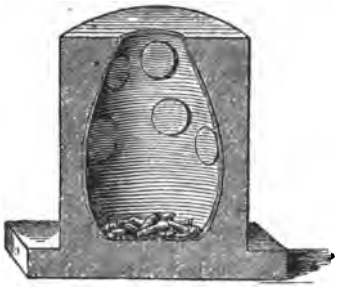
and there and again, yea, and oftentimes, language seems to beg the speaker not to drive at such a pace.

Hosea seems to have been "put to it" to adequately express by language the wickedness of wickedness—the general theme of chapter 7, and in one verse we shall see that he is driving at such a pace that the sentence is unfinished. Who was Hosea?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I A Cake Not Turned

Hosea's Meaning. Ephraim is a cake not turned. For the metaphor of this epigram Hosea has gone to the baker. Among all classes in the East, especially under conditions requiring haste, there is in demand a round, flat scone, which is baked by being laid on hot stones or attached to the wall of a heated oven. The whole art of baking consists in turning the scone over at the proper moment. If this be mismanaged, it does not need a baker to tell us that one side may be burnt to a cinder, while the other remains raw. "Ephraim," says Hosea, "is an unturned cake."



Bread Baking in an Arabian Oven.

By this he may mean one of several things, or all of them together, for they are infectious of each other. There was, for instance, the social condition of the people. What can better be described as an unturned scone than a community one-half of whose numbers are too rich, and the other too poor? Or Hosea may refer to that unequal distribution of religion through life with which in other parts of his prophecy he reproaches Israel. They keep their religion, as Amos more fully tells us, for their temples, and neglect to carry its spirit into their daily business. Or, he may refer to Israel's politics, which were equally in want of thoroughness. They rushed hotly at an enterprise, but having expended so much fire in the beginning of it, they let the end drop cold and dead. Or, he may wish to satirise, like Amos, Israel's imperfect culture—the pretentious and overdone arts, struck excrescence-wise upon the unrefined bulk of the nation, just as in many German principalities last century society took on a few French fashions in rough and exaggerated forms, while at heart still brutal and coarse. Hosea may mean any one of these things, for the figure suits all and all spring from the same defect. Want of thoroughness and equable effort was Israel's besetting sin, and it told on all sides of his life. How better describe a half-fed people, a half-cultured society, a half-lived religion, a half-hearted policy, than by a half-baked scone?

We are so proud of our political bakers, we who scorn the rapid revolutions of our neighbors and complacently dwell upon our equable ovens, those slow and cautious centuries of political development which lie behind us—have we anything better than our neighbors, anything better than Israel, to show in our civilization? Hosea's epigram fits us to the letter. After all those ages of baking, society is still with us "an unturned scone"; one end of the nation with the strength burnt out of it by too much enjoyment of life, the other with not enough of warmth to be quickened into anything like adequate vitality. No man can deny that this is so; we are able to live only by shutting our hearts to the fact. Or is religion equally distributed through the lives of the religious portion of our nation? Of late years religion has spread, and spread wonderfully, but of how many Christians is it still true that they are but half-baked—living a life one side of which is reeking with the smoke of sacrifice, while the other is never warmed by one religious thought. We may have too much religion if we confine it to one day or one department of life; our worship overdone, with the sap and the freshness burnt out of it, cindery, dusty, unattractive, fit only for crumbling; our conduct cold, damp, and heavy, like dough the fire has never reached. *Dr. George Adam Smith,* in *The Book of the Prophets.*

The Home Side. He who acts as a Christian when with friends or acquaintances and throws all his Christian principles to the winds when at home, deserves Hosea's term of a cake not turned. Surely that is not real Christianity which is not equal to the strain of every-day life, and the daily round of common-place duties. If ill-temper, or selfishness, or heedlessness of the wishes of others, is shown in the home, it cannot be atoned for by any amount of sweetness or generosity or thoughtfulness to those without the home. That Christianity is not worth much which is not an all-round Christianity, an every-day-in-the-week Christianity, and an every-hour-in-the-day Christianity.

Just imagine the great American public foisting its home manners on the outside world, writes Charles Battell Loomis in "The Knack of It." Why, life in the streets would be unsafe—it really would. Now let us suppose that Mr. Brown were to greet Mr. Allen pleasantly and say, "It's going to be a hot day." And Mr. Allen were to say in reply, "Confound you! don't you see I'm reading my paper?" What sort of man would Brown think Allen? Or if Allen said to the newswoman: "Here, get out of the way. You're blocking the passage. Women like you ought to be indicted as nuisances," would the world be any better for his presence?

Christianity must go through and through. "My friend says to me" writes Phillips Brooks: "I have not time to be a Christian. I have not room. If my life was not so full! You don't know how hard I work from morning to night. What time is there for me to be a Christian? What time is there, what room is there, for Christianity in such a life as mine?" It is as if the engine had said it had no room for the steam, as if the tree had said it had no room for the tide, as if the man had said he had no room for his soul, as if life said it had no time to live when it is life. It is not something that is added to life: it is life.

You cannot draw any lines whatever when you are dealing with the religious life, to quote Mr. James Buckham in "The Heritage of Life." There are no promises outside of it. It covers the equator and the poles, and thrusts its roots into the core, of the world of personality. If it does not go through and through a man, it does not go into him at all. That is the nature of religion; it is as thorough going, as permeating, as life itself.

II The Lord is a Good Bookkeeper

God does not forget. They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now have their own doings beset them about; they are before my face. So the prophet Hosea represents the Lord as speaking, and very true is his thought that the Lord is a good bookkeeper, keeping accurate credit and debit accounts: the wickedness of the Israelites was not overlooked nor forgotten, it was kept in remembrance, it testified against them.

You remember that in our last lesson of last year the prophet Malachi said Jehovah hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared Jehovah, and that thought upon his name. By this figure he expresses the true and comforting thought that no one who does the will of the Lord is forgotten by him. The prophet Hosea turns the shield around and lets us see the other side; there is a Book of Remembrance for those that fear not Jehovah, that think not upon his name; he who does not the will of the Lord is not forgotten by him.

Symptoms of Decay. Gray hairs are here and there upon Ephraim, and he knoweth it not, declared Hosea. The Israelites were unaware of their weakness, but it was plainly visible to the prophet. They were like those great trees in a forest which proudly lift their branches skyward and look as though they would stand for centuries, but here and there at the top, they have a dead limb, a clear indication to the practiced woodman that the tree is decayed at the heart.

We write our own Book of Remembrance.

We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future's atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own,
And in the field of destiny
We reap as we have sown. *Whittier.*

III Woe Unto Them That Follow Strong Drink

Mighty to drink Intoxicants. In the war between Russia and Japan, the Russians were again and again defeated because the soldiers were drunk with vodka. In a battle fought last week, at Agua Prieta on the Mexican border, the revolutionists were so sure of victory that they proceeded to celebrate it by drinking large quantities of mescal, the Mexican intoxicant made from the maguey plant. They became brutally drunk and then fled before the federal forces when a brief stand would have given them a complete victory. Since the days of Isaiah and Hosea, nation after nation has merited the scathing denunciations of those prophets for their use of intoxicants.

Following Strong Drink in England. In a sermon preached recently in the Lyceum Theatre, London, Mr. Rattenbury said that his country was often spoken of as "Christian England," but he had to confess that it was conspicuous for one sin. A friend of his was in Cairo, and was much impressed by the way in which boys in the street imitated the habits and characteristics of certain nations. The people looked on and applauded, giving the boys money because of the clever way in which they represented the great nations of the earth. First of all the boys would walk with a military strut, representing the Germans. Then they would gesticulate, and portray politeness, representing the French. Then the boys suddenly rolled about like drunken men—they were imitating the British. For this they won the greatest applause of all. Does it not fill you with shame? questioned Mr. Rattenbury. This nation, which stands for Jesus Christ, represented by its conspicuous sin of drunkenness!

The Lord High Chancellor in an address on "Drink and Social Reform" quoted these words of men who know the situation in England, and they apply equally well to our own land. "If it were not for drink they might almost shut up the doors of the divorce court." "After forty years' experience at the bar, and ten years as a judge, I know as a fact that ninety per cent. of the crime of this country depends upon intemperance."

A Wonderful Reformation. "Old Born Drunk" was lower than anything to be found among barbarous nations, debased almost out of humanity. Mr. Harold Begbie gives his history in "Twice-born Men." Brought to a Salvation Army meeting, he heard a man whom he knew testify. "While I was listening to Joe," he said, "thinking of what he's been, and seeing what he's become, all of a sudden it took me that I'd find God and get him to make me like Joe. It took me like that. I just felt, all of a sudden, determined to find God." "Determined," he repeated, with energy astonishing in this broken and hopeless creature of alcoholism. He tasted drink no more. "God has taken all the desire for it," he explained, "clean away from me."

An Educated African's Appeal. I can prove from my own knowledge that all the wars that have been fought by my tribe since the advent of civilization have been brought on by rash action on the part of drinking men. If we have not advanced high in the scale of civilization, neither had we until this fatal liquor was forced upon us, fallen so low as many. We need but an honest helping hand to raise us up to as high a state of culture as was possessed by most of the dark races at a time when the Western Continent was still in the gloom of barbarism.

If the present policy continues, we can not fight as men should against the wrong. The poison is fast doing its deadly work, and in a few years there will be none of us left to resist the oppressors. But our blood will be on their heads, and will cry to him for vengeance.

We appeal, not for a gift or favor, but for our right. Even as the Americans appeal for their rights and obtained them by heroic measures, so do we claim the right for "freedom to worship God," and to worship him by sobriety, industry, good-will and all the Christian graces. *Momolu Massoquoi,* Prince of the Veis, Sierra Leone, in the *Century Magazine.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The nation which in the future uses the smallest amount of alcohol will march at the head of the column. *Emperor William.*

The worst of alcohol as a poison is that it does not kill at once, and death when it comes is a mere detail compared with the weary years of misery, struggle, failure, and remorse. *Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell.*

It is not the last drink that ruins the man but the first. *President Hadley.*

The care of the body and the care of the soul are not two duties, but two parts of one duty. *Bishop Phillips Brooks.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

God must be a watchful and a just God. He sees everything and forgets nothing. Our doings are ever before him: they testify for or against us.

We will take heed unto our ways that we wander not from God.

We will never assemble ourselves for new wine; we will never make ourselves sick with wine or any intoxicant.

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

I. Moral Decay.
   1. The deeds of Ephraim witness against him, 1.
   2. God sees and remembers, 2.
   3. Wickedness in high places, 3-7.

II. Political Decay.
   1. A satire on Ephraim's foreign relations and home conditions, 8-16.
      a. Indications of decay, 9.
      b. Yet unrepentant, 10.
      c. Capacity for affairs lost, 11.
      d. Retribution sure, 13.
      e. False repentance, 14-16.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Alcohol is an insidious poison, and should be subject to the same strict limitation as opium, morphia, or strychnine—heading of a poster recently put up in one hundred British cities by order of the city councils. See a study of the liquor traffic under the title of "The Thin Crust of Civilization," *The American Magazine,* April, 1911.

2. Symptoms of decay. See the portrayal in "Romola" of the decay of character.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. On what other occasions was Peter the spokesman for all the disciples? (Jn. 6.67-70; Mt. 15.15, 16; 19.25-28; Lk. 12.41; Mk. 11. 20-22; Mt. 26.40.) 2. What does Luke say Jesus did just before his conversation with the disciples? (Lk. 9.18.) 3. What does Matthew tell about this conversation which Mark omits? (Mt. 16.17-19.) 4. What did Jesus say about confessing him before men? (Mt. 10.32.) 5. What did Peter say when he "rebuked" Jesus, as told by Matthew? (Mt. 16.22.)

Questions to think about. 1. Why did Jesus ask the disciples who other men thought him to be? 2. Who had first thought that Jesus was John the Baptist? (Lesson IX, Third Quarter.) 3. What reasons might have led the disciples to disbelieve that Jesus is the Christ? 4. What reasons had they for believing him the Christ? 5. Why did Peter's confession fill Jesus with joy? 6. Why did Jesus charge them to tell no one? 7. What did the people think of Jesus? 8. What did the Pharisees think of Jesus? 9. What do you think about Jesus as to his person, character, teaching, mission, influence? 10. In what ways does your thought of Jesus, your belief in him, influence your life? 11. What was Peter's motive in rebuking Jesus? 12. When before had Jesus said, Get behind me, Satan? (Lesson VIII, First Quarter.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

Christ's life work to become [illegible] God to men who should spread it after he was gone, and to [illegible] atonement for the sins of men -

LESSON VII—NOVEMBER 17

THE GREAT QUESTION

Golden Text

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Mt. 16.16

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 8.27-9.1. The Great Question. **T.** John 18.33-40. Question of Pilate. **W.** Matt. 21.1-11. Answer of the Multitudes. **T.** John 7.25-36. Questioning and Doubting. **F.** Isa. 53.1-12. The Great Prophecy. **S.** Luke 24.25-32. The Great Necessity. **S.** Luke 18.18-30. The Great Requirement. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 8.27-9.1 READ Mt. 16.13-28 COMMIT vv 36, 37

27 And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the villages of Cæsarea
Philippi: and on the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men
say that I am? 28 And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others,
Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. 29 And he asked them, But who say
ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. 30
And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.
31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many
things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests, and the scribes, and
be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And he spake the saying openly.
And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. 33 But he turning about, and
seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan; for
thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men. 34 And he called
unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would
come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
35 For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose
his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. 36 For what doth it profit
a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? 37 For what should a
man give in exchange for his life? 38 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me
and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also
shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the
holy angels. 1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some
here of them that stand *by*, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see
the kingdom of God come with power.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

27-30. *Jesus went forth.* See the Historical Background.—*On the way he asked his disciples.* And it came to pass, as he was praying apart, the disciples were with him, and he asked them, Lk. 9.18.—*John the Baptist.* See Mt. 14.2.—*Elijah.* See Mk. 6.16.—*One of the prophets.* They did not add *the Christ,* because those who had recognized him as the Messiah had been disappointed in him and had lost their faith.—*Who say ye. Ye* is emphatic in the Greek.—*Peter answereth.* He is often the spokesman for the rest of the apostles.—*The Christ.* The Messiah, the Anointed. See Jesus' words here, recorded in Mt. 16.17-19.—*They should tell no man of him.* Their own erroneous views of what the Christ would do could only make trouble if told to the multitudes.

31-33. *He began to teach them.* He had taught them before that his death was near—Mt. 9.15; 12.40; Jn. 2.18-22; 3.14; 6.51—but now he speaks more openly, plainly, verse 32.—*Peter took him.* Took him aside.—*Began to rebuke him.* Be it far from thee, Lord, he said, this shall never be unto thee, Mt. 16.22.—*Satan.* Peter was playing the tempter's part; the sharp rebuke shows

the intensity of Jesus' emotion.—*Thou mindest not the things of God.* Thou dost not think God's thoughts.

34-37. *Deny himself.* This does not mean the giving up of this or that, but the giving up of *self,* the yielding of one's will to Christ's will.—*Take up his cross.* Not only must his Master endure the cross but Peter, if he would be his true follower, must be ready to suffer death, too. A Christian is a Crucial, says Luther.—*Whosoever...save it.* The word *life* and the pronoun *it* referring to *life,* are used in a twofold sense here. The sentence means: He whose only care is to save his natural life shall lose his spiritual life; and he who is willing to lose his natural life for my sake shall find his spiritual life.—*To gain the whole world and forfeit his life.* "The contrast is not between gaining this world and losing the next; nor exactly between acquiring material and sacrificing spiritual interests; but between gaining that which is external to oneself and losing one's own character and life in the process. Luke gives it more clearly: "For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself, or be cast away?" (*Abbott*).

38-1. *This adulterous and sinful generation.* "Morally and spiritually depraved" (*Stalker*).—*When he cometh in the glory of his Father.* At the Last Judgment.—*In no wise.* By no means.—*Taste of death.* A figure used by the rabbis, which represents death as a bitter cup pressed to the lips.—*Till they see the Kingdom of God come with power.* This is a difficult saying: some interpret it to refer to the Transfiguration which followed, others to Pentecost, to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., to the Last Judgment. Dr. Morrison's words are helpful: If the coming of Christ in his Kingdom be regarded as applicable to only one definite event in the evolution of the ages, then the statement must be indeed the most difficult imaginable. We really could not conceive of it having been uttered in the full, clear consciousness of a true perspective, stretching away out into the future. We must hence suppose that while there is undoubtedly some grand culminating *coming,* which is still in the future, yet there has been in actual history, and may yet be, veritable instalments of the consummation. Doubtless our Lord referred to the marvelous enlargement, consolidation, and establishment of his kingdom, which was to take place on the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem, and in which there would be an exceedingly vivid glimpse of the greater future glory.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *Who say ye that I am?* A photographer makes his sensitive plate, exposes it to just the rays of light that he chooses, dips it into the proper solutions, and holds it up to the light to see if his picture is there. What else did this Great Teacher do on that day but hold up these souls to the light to find out if the reflection of the Son of God were fastened there? *J. M. Stifler,* in *The Fighting Saint.*

31. *The Son of man must suffer.* The Evangelists, indeed, write it down in plain language, as fully taught them by later experience, that he was to be rejected by the rulers of Israel, slain, and to rise again the third day. And there can be as little doubt that Christ's language (as afterwards they looked back upon it) must have clearly implied all this, as that at the time they did not fully understand it. Otherwise, they could not afterwards have been in such doubt about his death and resurrection. He was so constantly in the habit of using symbolic language, and had only lately reproved them for taking that about the "leaven" in a literal, which he had meant in a figurative sense, that it was but natural they should have regarded in the same light announcements which, in their strict literality, would seem to them well-nigh incredible. They could well understand his rejection by the scribes—a sort of figurative death, or violent suppression of his claims and doctrines, and then, after briefest period, their resurrection, as it were, but not these terrible details in their full literalness. *Alfred Edersheim.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

34. *Take up his cross and follow me.* So accustomed are we to the use of this term that the originality and the pathos of it in the mouth of Jesus may es-

cape notice. As far as I am aware, it originated with him; and it is interesting to consider out of what experience it arose. It is quite possible that, when very young, he may have witnessed the act of crucifixion, this punishment being common in Palestine. He may, as a boy, have followed the noisy crowd and watched the miserable victims on the way to execution. His sensitive soul would take in all the horror of this most ghastly of all punishments; but one trait of cruelty and scorn appears especially to have stung his imagination. This was the fact that from the place of detention to the place of execution the condemned man had, amid the laughter and jeers of the multitude, to carry on his own back the apparatus of his doom—an indignity which, as far as I remember, is without a parallel. This burned in the memory of Jesus; and when he required a name for all that can be imagined of shame and suffering, he said, "Let him take up his cross and follow me." *Dr. James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus and his disciples, you remember, left Capernaum early in the summer of A. D. 29 for the region of Tyre and Sidon (where they cured the daughter of the Syrian woman); from there they went eastward and then southward to the Decapolis, east of the Sea of Galilee, where he performed many cures, and then, coming near the eastern shore of the lake, fed the four thousand people who came to hear him. Thence he crossed to Magdala, and there the waiting Pharisees and Sadducees demanded a sign from him. Near Bethsaida he gave sight to a blind man. The multitude, influenced by the Pharisees, began to desert him. A second northern journey was made, this time to the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi.

When Jesus there asked his disciples, Who say ye that I am? the climax of his ministry was reached, for he thus voiced the aim of all his training of the chosen twelve, and in Peter's answer he read the assurance that his goal had been attained. "No general ever knew more clearly what he meant to accomplish by a season's campaign," says Mr. J. M. Stifler in "The Fighting Saint," "than did Jesus in the short time of his ministry. He had a definite plan which possibly his disciples did not know until after his ascension, but which is as plain as a carven statue when we look at his life with the object of finding it out. Jesus had steadily educated these men up to this point by a process of instruction that makes the modern student of pedagogy wonder at its perfection. See how he did it. First he called them, attracted them, won their confidence and willingness. Then he put before them an ideal—the Sermon on the Mount. This he followed up with the demonstration of his own life and powers. Next he sent them out to preach, to try it for themselves: the principle of learning by doing. Last of all he called them aside and said, 'Now, who am I?' and they knew him. After this he had only one thing remaining to do, which he completed when he said, 'It is finished.'"

It is now the summer of A. D. 29, six months before the crucifixion.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Cæsarea Philippi is about thirty miles northeast of Capernaum. It is magnificently situated, more than eleven hundred feet above sea level, at the foot of beautiful Mount Hermon, which towers above it for more than eight thousand feet. The lower slopes of the mountain are covered with vineyards, but the three peaks are white with snow even in early summer. "The abundant water here produces luxuriant vegetation, fertile fields stretch away to the westward, while groves of stately poplars, great oaks, and lowlier evergreens surround the place with perennial charm." Herod the Great built a white marble temple at Paneas, as the Greeks called the place, and his son Philip the Tetrarch enlarged the town and changed its name to Cæsarea. In honor of Philip, and also to distinguish it from Cæsarea on the coast, Philippi was added.

Assign paragraphs 167, 168 and 174-176, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Show your pupils Leeper's picture, "On the way to Cæsarea Philippi," 1904,

2-2, and drawing on the board an outline of Palestine locate that city and indicate the journey. Picture Mount Hermon. Describe the life of the disciples with their Master as that of pupils in Christ's school, recall what they had seen Jesus do and what they had heard Jesus say, and bring out clearly the lessons they had learned. Have your pupils tell you the two questions Jesus asked near Cæsarea Philippi, and the answers he received, and dwell upon Jesus' joy on hearing that they knew him as the Son of God, for they were to carry on his work. Tell them how Yi Sang Choi learned to know Jesus, page 416. Make clear what knowing Jesus as Lord involves, adapting Dr. Jowett's words, page 417. Then tell them the conversation a little girl once had with her mother. "How old must I be, mother, before I can be a Christian?" the child questioned, and her mother in her turn asked, "How old will you have to be before you love me?" "Why, mother," she replied, "I have always loved you." "How old must you be before you can trust yourself wholly to me and my care?" continued her mother. "I always did, but tell me now what I want to know." "How old will you have to be before you do what I want you to do?" her mother asked. And the little girl, half guessing what her mother meant, whispered, "I can now, without waiting to grow older." Then her mother said: "And so you can be a Christian now. You can love and try to please the One who says, 'Let the little ones come unto me.'"

If there is time verses 31-33 can be taught, but the remainder of the lesson should be omitted. Memory work for next week: Golden Text and Phil. 2.11, or stanza on page 422.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils.

Are ye acquaint wi' Jesus?
None can tell the happiness
There is wi' ken' in' him,
Wi' love tae rich and puir folk a'
His hert's fou tae the brim.

These are the words which Lord Roseberry wrote in his Bible. When did Peter first become acquainted with Jesus? Did he then know him well? If you were asked if you were acquainted with some one whom you have met once or twice, would you say yes? Would you be acquainted with him in the sense that Lord Roseberry uses the word? What was it necessary for Peter to do before he really knew Jesus well? We have seen how he lived with Jesus and had the happiness of knowing him, of seeing how full to the brim was his heart with love for rich and poor folks all. Now Jesus wishes to know whether having been so many months in his school—for he was a disciple you know, and that means a pupil, a learner,—whether he and the other disciples have really learned who their Great Teacher is. And one day, when they had gone to the farthest northern city in the Holy Land—What was it called?—he asked them two questions. What was the first one?

For Older Pupils. What did the Pharisees think of Jesus? Already they had agreed to put him to death. What did the multitude think of him? Already they are deserting him. What did the disciples think of him? What did they think of him when first they began to share his life? At the time when all Europe was afire with enthusiasm for Napoleon and his wonderful exploits, Beethoven dedicated his Symphony No. 3 to him. Months passed, and Napoleon stepped down in disgrace from the pedestal on which the people had enthroned him, and then Beethoven destroyed his dedication exclaiming, "So, this one, too, is nothing more than an ordinary man!" Peter and James and John and the rest began to follow Jesus in the belief that he was no ordinary man. They lived with him, shared his daily life and daily thoughts, and the wonder of that life grew upon them. Never did they exclaim, "So this One, too, is nothing more than an ordinary man!" His life among them from day to day only deepened their early conviction. But have they grasped the great truth of his divinity? Jesus would have them make an avowal of their belief.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The All-Important Question

Who say Ye that I am? This is the all-important question which every one who knows about Jesus must answer. There are those who have no definite convictions whatever in regard to Jesus; there are others who regard him as only a dreamy, impractical man; there are some who see in him a great historic character, the ideal man of the human race; there are yet others who know that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Peter's Confession. It was a divine revelation to the man—a flash of intuition, which drew into itself the best thoughts, feelings and experiences of the past two years. The lowly origin of the Carpenter, the familiarity of daily intercourse, the shocks of disappointment, the delay of hopes making the heart sick, the haughty repudiation of Jesus by the authorized teachers of Israel, and the ebbing tide of his popularity in Galilee, might have almost justified a fisherman's inability to decide this momentous question. But, in spite of all doubts and dread uncertainties, there was that in Simon's soul which leapt up in answer to the Master's word,—leal-heartedness and a sudden sense of the greatness of the Reality in Jesus—impelled by this Spirit, he trampled down all doubts, all prudent cautions and reservations, and burst out in enthusiastic confession of faith and loyalty. *William A. Grist,* in *The Historic Christ in the Faith of To-day.*

A Hindu Scholar's Answer. In the city of Allahabad an Oxford graduate related to Mr. Clayton Cooper his experience with a Brahman student who read the Bible with him for over a year. Especial attention was given to the life and teaching of Jesus, but no reference was made to the Brahman's acceptance of Christ. But at the end of the one year the teacher said to his Hindu scholar, "What do you think of Jesus Christ?" The answer came slowly, but with peculiar certainty: "I think that Jesus Christ was the greatest Man who ever lived. I think—yes, I know—he is my Saviour."

Korean Answers. Yi Sang Choi was a member of the first Korean embassy sent to Washington. While at our capital a Chinese diplomat told him that our civilization was founded on the Bible, and gave him a copy of the Book of Proverbs and of the New Testament in Chinese to read. After reading a few chapters here and there he decided that the philosophy of Confucius was superior and on his return he spoke publicly against the Christian doctrine. Another Korean of noble birth, Jai So Peel, who had been educated here and had become a naturalized citizen, returned to Korea for a time and gave a series of addresses to his countrymen on the subject of Christianity. He then started the "Independence Club," where matters political and religious were freely discussed. The government became suspicious of this club and imprisoned many of its members, putting together in one prison Jai So Peel and ten Confucianists. The Christian suggested that they while away their time by a careful study and discussion of the teachings of Christ. They all became so interested in their debates that often they talked all night, and in the end the ten Confucianists all accepted Christ. Yi Sang Choi is now the religious director in the Seoul Y. M. C. A., four others are Y. M. C. A. workers, and three others are influential Christian government officials.

II Proof of a Genuine Acknowledgment of God in Christ

Saying Lord, Lord. The acknowledgment of God in Christ, as Browning says, solves for thee all questions in the earth and out of it. But an admission, a valiant assertion even, of the deity of Christ, is not the acknowledgment of God in Christ which solves all these questions. (One may be most orthodox in creed and most unchristian in life. It is easy enough to say the words, but not he that sayeth Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father in heaven, entereth the kingdom. Our lives are no more influenced by an orthodox opinion held in regard to Jesus as the Christ if we do not submit ourselves to him, than are our plants affected by our belief in the virtue of sunshine if we keep them in a dark cellar.) "Many men talk of the deity of Christ, not because they have lived with him until this has become a burning truth, but because the stout as-

sertion of it is held to be an unfailing test of orthodoxy," writes Bishop McDowell. "They ardently quote the words of the confession of the articles—Very God of very God and very man of very man—true words, but absolutely dead words unless one has lived his way into them by living companionship with our Brother and Lord."

He who answers the Question aright, knows Jesus. What does it mean to know Jesus? Here is a guiding word from the Apostle John: "He that saith, I know him, and keepth not his commandments, is a liar." Then how many of us know him? "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not..." Then knowledge implies obedience. There can be no knowledge of Christ without obedience. Without obedience we may have a few ideas about him, but we do not know him.

What is obedience? Confining our inquiry strictly to the human plane, what is essentially implied in obedience? When one man obeys another it is implied that he subjects his will to the will of the other, and works in harmony with its demands. The oarsman in our university boats have to subject their wills to the will of the strokesman, whose stroke determines and controls the rest. The oarsmen have but one will. That is obedience, a will attuned to the will of another, and without that attuning of the will no knowledge of Christ can ever be gained.

"He that loveth not, knoweth not God." Then how many of us know him? No love: no knowledge! May we not slightly alter the former word of the Apostle, and read it thus—"He that saith, I know him, and loveth not, is a liar." It would be just as reasonable for a man without eyes to claim he sees the stars, as for a man without love to claim he knows the Lord. Without love we cannot know Christ. What is love? Love is "good-will toward men." Observe, good *will* towards men, not merely good wish; willing good, not only wishing it! To wish a thing and to will it, may be quite two different things. Wishing may be only a sweet and transient sentiment; willing implies effort, active and persistent work. Wishing dreams; willing creates. Love is good-will, the willing of good toward all men, the effort to think the best of all men, and to help them on to the best. That is love. "He that loveth not...knoweth not God."

To know Christ, I must obey, and obedience can become a spontaneous habit. To know Christ, I must love, and loving can become a spontaneous habit. To know Christ, I must will as Christ wills. To know Christ, I must love as Christ loves. To know Christ, I must have the habit of his willing and his loving. To know Christ, I must have the habits of Christ. And what is this but to say that to know Christ I must be like him?

So we are driven a further step on towards our conclusion. The principle arrived at is this, that knowledge necessitates likeness. Have we not abundant proof of its truth? Two unlikes cannot know each other. Two men who are morally unlike each other may live together, and neither can possibly know the contents of the other's life. He may be able to name them; he does not know them. How would you describe pain to a man who has never experienced it? He cannot know it. He cannot even imagine it. Pain is only known by the pain-ridden. Knowledge implies likeness. There are women in our midst who can form no possible conception of jealousy. They have no jealous substance within them, and they cannot know it. Knowledge implies likeness. The principle has a wide application. To know you must be. To know music, you must be musical. To know art, you must be artistic. To know Christ you must be Christlike.

To know Jesus is to share his life! His life is eternal. Life eternal is just Christ-life. This is life eternal, to have life like Christ, to know him in spirit and in truth. Condensed from *Thirsting for the Springs,* by *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

III The Unprofitable Bargain

One who literally gained the Whole World, and forfeited his Life. The Prætorians ran out upon the ramparts, and with a loud voice, proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of to the best bidder by public auction. Didius Julianus, eager for the prize, promised a donation of 6250 drachms, or upwards of two hundred pounds sterling, to each soldier, and he was declared

emperor, and received an oath of allegiance from the soldiers...Julian was conducted into a private apartment of the baths of the palace, and beheaded as a common criminal, after having purchased, with an immense treasure, an anxious and precarious reign of only sixty-six days. *Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

The Soul is Essential to the Enjoyment of the World. Mark Hopkins once put this question to his class in this way: "You would like to have the world, as much of it at least as you want. Would you be willing to have the world, all of it that you want, and be deaf? Perhaps you would. Would you be willing to have the world, all of it that you want, and be deaf and dumb? Perhaps you would. Would you be willing to have the world, all of it you want, and be deaf and dumb and blind? Perhaps you would, but I doubt it: for the time comes in such a reckoning when you must face the issue of being or having."

And yet we are in danger of forgetting that it is the soul in us which makes the world desirable. When that is reduced, the world is reduced; when that is gone, the world is gone. The parable of our Lord spoken to this point has its constant illustration before our eyes. Some one who has been putting this principle of exchange into practice reaches the time when he can pull down his barns and build greater, and then begins to say to his soul; Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But the soul answers him not a word. It is dumb and dead. And the man goes about among his possessions, solitary and empty. The world looks on in pity or contempt, and says that he has overdone the matter. At what point in the process of this exchange of his soul for the world did he begin to overdo the matter? *W. J. Tucker,* in *Personal Power.*

Things too dearly bought. If I only can make money and become a rich man I shall be satisfied, says the youth starting out in life. Really?

We must make every effort to establish ourselves in the best society before Helen is through school, says the ambitious mother; this is the chief thing. Is it?

Fame, intoxicating fame, must be mine however it is attained, say the Marie Bashkirtseffs. Indeed?

Power shall be mine, the glory of making men's wills bow to mine, for this I will give up all else in life, the strong man acknowledges to himself. In truth?

A life of ease is what I crave, nothing else matters, but peace and comfort I must have at all costs. Truly?

I must have a good time, a gay time, as long as life lasts, for this is what my nature demands. Does it?

Wealth, position, fame, power, leisure, good times, are all good in themselves, but they are not the chief good. They may be too dearly bought. To gain them much that is of far greater value may be lost. It may be that had the freight not been cast overboard from Paul's ship, the ship and all on board would have perished. What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? But one thing is needful, said the Saviour in the Bethany home. In deed and in truth.

Whosoever shall lose his Life for my Sake and the Gospel's shall save it. If any of you enter the Gospel ministry in this or other lands, let not your object be so much to "do your duty," or even to "save souls," though these should have a place in your motives, as to please the Lord Jesus. Let this be your ruling motive in all that you do. Some one asked me not long ago whether faith or love influenced me most in going to the heathen. I thought of it awhile and at length concluded that there was in me but little of either. But in thinking of what did influence me, I remembered a time, out in the woods back of Andover Seminary, when I was almost disheartened. Everything looked dark. No one had gone out from this country. The way was not open. The field was far distant and in an unhealthy climate. I knew not what to do. All at once that last command seemed to come to my heart directly from heaven. I could doubt no longer, but determined on the spot to obey it at all hazards for the sake of pleasing the Lord Jesus Christ. *Adoniram Judson.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

This world has many Peters, who wish to be wiser than Christ, and to prescribe to him what it is needful to do. *Hofmeister.*

Acquaintance with Christ apart from real heart knowledge of him is little short of a tragedy. *J. Stuart Holden.*

He to whom the Eternal Word speaks is delivered from a multitude of opinions. *Thomas à Kempis.*

Life with Jesus gets the vision of the truth about Jesus. *Bishop McDowell.*

Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2.11.

No one knows better than the sated worldling that it would profit nothing to gain the whole world. *Borden P. Bowne.*

If I were you, with health and youth in touch,
I would not, for the more, neglect the much. *Edward C. Lefroy.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

This wonderful Presence that shines from the Gospels, this vision of Deity in humanity that has been yours throughout the year,—are you to look and then pass on as though you had but seen a work of art? This Voice that sounds throughout the centuries, are you to listen as though but to a gifted Orator? What is Jesus Christ to you? A Name? Your Master?

What acts of obedience to what you understand to be his will have you done this year? Of what sympathy with his aims have you given proof? What share in his work have you had, this year? If there have been no doing of his words, no manifested sympathy with the things of the kingdom, what proof can there be that he is the Lord to you?

If you cannot answer the all-important question as Peter did, will you not sign this covenant worded by Dr. Torrey? "I promise to examine carefully the evidence that the Bible is God's book and Jesus Christ is God's Son and man's Saviour; and if I find reason to believe that this book is true and he is man's Saviour, I will accept him and confess him before men and undertake to follow him."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What the world to-day thinks of Jesus. How Christ may be made a Great Reality to us.
2. The School of Suffering.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. To what event does "after six days" refer? 2. Read the account in Matthew and Luke. 3. On what other occasions were Peter, James and John the favored disciples? (Lesson VII, Third Quarter; Matthew 26.36.) 4. What does Luke say that Jesus was doing as he was transfigured? 5. How does Luke interpret the word *transfigured?* (Lk. 9.29.) 6. What does the word *glistering* mean? (Dictionary.) 7. What is a *fuller?* (Dictionary.) 8. Of what were Elijah and Moses talking with Jesus according to Luke? (9. 31.) 9. What was a tabernacle? (Clipping, page 421.) 10. To what did Jesus refer when he said Elijah restoreth all things? (Clipping, page 421.) 11. What did Peter record long afterwards about this vision? (2 Pet. 1.16-18.) 12. What does Paul say in 2 Corinthians about being transformed? (3.12-18.)

Questions to think about. 1. Where were Jesus and his disciples in our last lesson? What mountain near by was probably the scene of the Transfiguration? 2. What elements of Old Testament religion did Moses and Elijah represent? (Law and prophecy.) 3. What was peculiar about the departure from life of both Moses and Elijah? (Dt. 34.5; 2 K. 2.11.) 4. When before have we heard about a voice from heaven speaking the words of v. 7? (Lesson VIII, First Quarter.) 5. What did the Transfiguration do for the disciples? 6. For Jesus? 7. What future events show that the disciples did not grasp the meaning of Jesus' words in v. 9? 8. What is the connection in thought of the disciples' question in v. 11, with the command of Jesus, v. 9? (Clipping, page 421.) 9. Whom did Jesus mean when he said "Elijah is come"?

Note Book Work. Continue the work as usual.

LESSON VIII—NOVEMBER 24

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Golden Text

A voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my Son, my chosen: hear ye him. And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone. Luke 9.35, 36

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 9.2-13. The Transfiguration. **T.** Ex. 34.29-35. A Shining Face. **W.** John 12.20-28. Glory Through Death. **T.** Col. 1.9-23. Pre-eminent in Glory. **F.** John 1.9-18. The True Light of Glory. **S.** Col. 1.24-29. The Hope of Glory. **S.** 2 Cor. 3.12-18. Transformed by Beholding. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 9.2-13 READ Mt. 17.1-8; Luke 9.28-36 COMMIT vv 9, 10

2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them; 3 and his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. 4 And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. 5 And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. 6 For he knew not what to answer; for they became sore afraid. 7 And there came a cloud overshadowing them: and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son: hear ye him. 8 And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should have risen again from the dead. 10 And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean. 11 And they asked him, saying, *How is it* that the scribes say that Elijah must first come? 12 And he said unto them, Elijah indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be set at nought? 13 But I say unto you, that Elijah is come, and they have also done unto him whatsoever they would, even as it is written of him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2-4. *After six days.* From the time of Peter's great confession.—*Peter and James and John.* The favored three who were the only witnesses of the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and were the ones nearest Jesus in Gethsemane.—*A high mountain.* See the Geographical Background.—*Apart by themselves.* Away from the other disciples.—*Transfigured.* The fashion of his countenance was altered, Lk. 9.29.—*Glistering.* Shining.—*Fuller.* One who fulls (thickens by moistening, beating and pressing) cloth.—*Elijah.* Representative of the prophets.—*Moses.* Representative of the Law.—*Talking.* See Lk. 9.31.

5-7. *Answered.* He replied, not to a question, but to the situation as he saw it. We learn from Luke's account that the three had been asleep and when suddenly awakened they saw the heavenly visitors and were "sore afraid."—*Rabbi.* Master.—*It is good for us to be here.* Compare the hymn: My willing soul would stay in such a frame as this, and sit and sing myself away, to everlasting bliss.—*Tabernacles.* Or, *booths,* RVm. See page 421.—*A cloud.* A bright cloud (Mt.), a symbol of God's glory, recalling the Shekinah in the temple and the pillar of cloud and fire in the wilderness.—*There came a voice.* As the Baptism with its Voice was the prelude to the ministry, so the Trans-

figuration with its Voice was the prelude to the cross.—*This is my beloved Son.* The testimony at his baptism. Read 2 Pet. 1.16-18.

9-13. *Risen again from the dead.* A clear prophecy of his resurrection, which they seem not to have comprehended.—*How is it that the scribes say.* Or, *the scribes say,* RVm.—*Elijah must first come.* They had just seen Elijah. Why must they not speak about this vision, since they could thereby assure the scribes, who laid stress on the coming first of Elijah, that Jesus is the Messiah? —*And restoreth all things.* A quotation, it is thought, of the scribes' saying, who held that Elijah would restore the golden pot of manna, the vessel of anointing oil, and the vessel of water for purification. See Mal. 4.5, 6.—*Elijah is come.* He refers to John the Baptist.—*They have done unto him.* The scribes would have done what Herod did, put him to death.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Let us make three tabernacles.* It was a foolish suggestion, it was an admittedly foolish suggestion, and yet it is significant even in its foolishness. There is no need to think even of the unsuitability of booths for the immortals, nor even to suggest that the foolishness lies in the placing of the Christ on a level with Moses and Elijah; the root of the mistake lies here: it is good to be here, *therefore let us stay here!* It was in the condition of mind expressed in the language rather than in the language itself that the mistake lay. In that moment Peter had come perilously near the condition of the man who said: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up...take thine ease." The temptation that assailed him was the temptation of the monk in the Legend Beautiful, which opens with the words: "Hadst thou *stayed,* I must have fled." Peter voted for staying. It is the temptation that assails every soul that rises to the high places. It is peculiar to mountain-top experiences. It is good; let us stay where we are, let us maintain this high level, let life go on in this ecstasy. Privileges tend to selfishness as visions are apt to become an end in themselves. *J. N. Britton,* in *Two Mistakes and Their Correction.*

Peter does not always appear to good advantage. His remarks on the Mount of Transfiguration and on some other occasions were rather unhappy. But he has a very high average. He could risk his reputation on his reply at Cæsarea Philippi and his address at Pentecost. Indeed, these two utterances would float a good deal of talk which was not in itself up to their own level. *Bishop W. F. McDowell,* in *The School of Christ.*

7. *This is my beloved Son.* God was satisfied with the private life in Nazareth, with the honest toil of the carpenter's shop, with the years of public ministry, with the deeds of love that had been scattered over all the pathway: the whole life of Jesus from beginning to end had given satisfaction to the heart of God. *Dr. G. Campbell Morgan,* in *The Crises of the Christ.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *Let us make three tabernacles.* He proposed to do what any Galilean peasant would do to-day, if arrested by nightfall on a bleak and exposed hillside. He would at once, rather than travel in the night, look out for brushwood and rushes and quickly weave a few loose, rough hurdles to form a screen from the wind. *H. B. Tristram.*

When passing through the village of Banias (the modern Cæsarea Philippi), I saw a curious sight. On the roof of every house there was a kind of booth made of leaves and branches woven together, and supported on long poles, like the canopy of a four-post bed. It was made mostly of oleander bushes—the willow of Scripture—whose leaves do not when they wither fall off the twigs. During the summer months the heat inside the squalid mud-houses is unbearable; and the inhabitants take refuge in the airier dwellings on the roof; and the thick screen of foliage above their heads protects them from the heavy dews at night. It was of such booths or tabernacles that Peter was thinking. *Hugh Macmillan,* in *Expository Times.*

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Between the Great Question and its answer six days intervened, during which

Jesus must have been trying to teach his dull pupils the truth which he began to teach them in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi, and they would have none of it, for Peter impulsively rebuked his Master and said, "Far be it from thee, Lord." On that day he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes; and be killed and after three days rise again. Were the disciples perplexed and anxious during that week? Did that mysterious announcement seem to them so utterly impossible for him whom they had declared the Christ, that they were depressed, possibly even faltering in their faith? On the Mount the answer came, he was transfigured before them, and they knew that, however the mystery was to be explained, their Master was the very Son of God. The Transfiguration with its revelation of glory and power was needed to dispel their despondency occasioned by the prophecy of his suffering and death.

A Booth or Tabernacle

The time was a week after the Great Confession, and since Luke says that the descent from the mountain took place "the next day" it may have been at night.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The traditional Mount of Transfiguration is Mount Tabor on the northeastern boundary of the Plain of Esdraelon. To-day the Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches have each a shrine there marking the exact spot of the scene! We know, however, that at this time there was a village on the top of Mount Tabor which had been fortified against Vespasian, and therefore it could not have been here that Jesus went "apart" with his disciples. They were in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi the week before, and all scholars agree that the scene of the Transfiguration must have been one of the three peaks of Mount Hermon, which tower above Cæsarea Philippi, nine thousand feet above sea level. Dr. Hugh Macmillan speaks of the cloud that overshadowed Christ and the disciples and recalls how quickly the mist gathers on a high mountain and how quickly it disappears.

Assign paragraphs 59, 168, and 14-16, 32-34, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

I know a small boy who has two faces. Who knows what I mean? Sometimes I hear others say, "What a fine little fellow he is, so cheery and good-natured, so ready to do a little service for others with a happy smile," and then I see one of his faces. And sometimes I hear it said that he is much given to pouting when things go wrong, and that so often he looks like a thunder-cloud, and then—I see the other face. Do you know such a boy or girl? What is the stanza you learned this week?

"Beautiful faces are they that wear
The light of a pleasant spirit there;
It matters little if dark or fair."

The face of Jesus must have been always beautiful, for we know that he had

a wonderful Spirit, but one day three of his disciples were permitted to see more of its marvelous beauty than ever before.

Teach only verses 2-8. Show Raphael's picture of The Transfiguration, Perry No. 339. Explain about the tabernacles, page 421, and why Peter's wish was foolish and wrong. Tell about the Changed Faces in Japan, page 426, and arouse in your pupils the same wish. Memory work for next week: stanzas, p. 429.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Speak first about the wonderful fact that in all this universe there are no two faces exactly alike. Then question your pupils about what makes a beautiful face, and the difference between a face faultless in feature and coloring and one that is good to look upon because of the beautiful spirit back of it. "I do not know who it is," said Emerson as he stood by the bier of his friend Longfellow, for he had then lost his memory for facts, "but," he added with conviction, "I know that he must have had a beautiful soul." Tell the story of the Triumph of a Beautiful Soul, page 425, and then question your pupils about the one occasion when the most beautiful Soul that ever lived was disclosed to a chosen few.

For Older Pupils. A young missionary in China was called by the natives "Mr. Glory-face" because they saw so much of the light of God shining on his countenance. As Dr. Maclaren says, faint foreshadowings of the Spirit's power to light up the face with unearthly beauty of holiness are not unknown among us. And it may be that the glory which always shone in the depths of Jesus' perfectly holy manhood rose, as it were, to the surface for that one time which we study to-day, a witness of what he really was, a prophecy of what humanity may become.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Purpose of the Transfiguration

This is my Beloved Son. The story of the transfiguration is that of the coming to final perfection of the human nature of Jesus. Up to this point the life had been probationary. A perfect instrument had nevertheless been subjected to the testing of temptation and of responsibility. In both he had been victorious, mastering all attacks made upon him by the under-world of evil, and living so absolutely at the disposal of God, as to have been the instrument through which light had shined upon others. Thus through innocence and holiness he came to that transfiguration, or metamorphosis, by which without death he, in his humanity, was prepared to pass from the earthly scene into all the larger spaces of the life that lay beyond. In the glory of this mountain we see him revealing the ultimate intention of God, and the consequent consummation of human nature. The contrast between this Man and all other men who must pass to death because of sin, became most vivid this hour. At this point in the narrative of Luke the utmost reach of the Greek ideal was realized. This is the absolutely perfect human Being. All the rest of the story has to do with sacrificial work on behalf of others. *G. Campbell Morgan,* in *The Analyzed Bible:*

A Preparation for Christ's Exodus. The transfiguration marks a crisis in Christ's own inward history: it had a greater meaning and value for himself than it could possibly have for his disciples. The truth is, surely, that the transfiguration was designed for the preparation of Jesus himself, and only secondarily for a revelation to the disciples. The transaction between the heavenly Father and the Son must remain mysterious to us, since we fall short of the standard of manhood shown in Christ. The context of the incident in the Gospels is very significant: the story lies in a framework of Passion-discourses: it is preceded and followed by Christ's own personal predictions of suffering, death and resurrection. The Transfiguration was the preparation of Christ for his Exodus. On that mountain, Jesus laid himself like another Isaac on the altar, and he knew that the sacrifice would be demanded. The very glory of the event contains a hint of the struggle which had been going on in his mind. Jesus was no impassive hero of a romantic history: he was a Soul in the agony

of a momentous spiritual transaction. The hour had come when he was to make a voluntary dedication of himself for a sacrifice than which history knows no sublimer: and this self-consecration was destined to be met by a distinct communication of divine approval. As he was praying about his Passion, he entered into the ecstasy of oneness with the heavenly Father: in the heart of Jesus all the holy resolutions of a lifetime were encouraged and strengthened, as the fashion of his countenance became changed. *William Alexander Grist,* in *The Historic Christ in the Faith of To-day.*

The Purpose of Mountain Visions. In that book which is known as the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the apostle, now grown into old age, is heard recalling the event of which the story is told in this chapter of St. Mark. "And this voice which came from heaven," he says, "we heard when we were with him in the holy mount." He is remembering the Transfiguration. Through all the busy and burdened years which have come in between, Peter has never ceased to hear that voice which on the mountain had declared Jesus to be "the beloved Son of God."

It seems to me like this: A traveler is going through a country by a long straight road which leads at last to a great city which is his final goal. At the very beginning of the journey the road leads over a high hill. Upon the summit of that hill the traveler can clearly see the spires of the far-away city flashing in the sun. He feasts his eyes on it. He fills his eyes with it. And then he follows the road down into the valley. It loses the sight of the city almost immediately. It plunges into forests. It sounds the depths in which flow the dark waters which the sun never touches. But yet it never forgets the city which it saw from the hilltop. It feels that distant, unforgotten glory drawing it toward it in a tight straight line. And when at last the traveler enters in and makes that city thenceforth his home, it is not strange to him, because of the prophecy of it which has been in his heart ever since he saw it from the hill.

If we read rightly, thus, the method by which God brings his children to their best attainment, it is certainly a method full of wisdom and beauty. First he lets shine upon them for a moment the thing he wants them to become, the greatness or the goodness which he wishes them to reach. And then, with that shining vision fastened in their hearts, he sets them forth on the long road to reach it. The vision does not make it theirs. The journey is still to be made, the battle is still to be fought, the task is still to be done. But all the time, through the long process, that sight which the man saw from the mountain-top is still before the eyes, and no darkness can be perfectly discouraging to him who keeps that memory and prophecy of light.

When we have really grasped this truth, then how interesting and impressive becomes the sight of the life of our fellow-men! Many and many of these men whom we see plodding on in their dusty ways are traveling with visions in their souls. Nobody knows it but themselves and God. Once, years ago, they saw a light. They knew, if only for a moment, what companionships, what attainments, they were made for. That light has never faded. It is the soul of good things which they are doing in the world to-day. It makes them sure when other men think their faith is gone. It will be with them till the end, until they come to all its prophecies. Condensed from *Sermons for the Church Year,* by *Phillips Brooks.*

II Prayer the Secret of Transfigured Lives

As he prayed, the Fashion of his Countenance was altered. Luke's version makes clear that the Mount of Transfiguration was first the Mount of Prayer. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray, and as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered. And who can say that the transfiguration was not a direct answer to the prayer? As from the heart of a diamond its splendor glows, so from the soul of Jesus his divine majesty gleamed, for in that moment his inner glory was made manifest, "the glory of his divinity that was hidden by the veil of his humanity was kindled and burst through." He was transfigured by fellowship with the Father.

Jesus' whole life was a prayer life. And he had special times and places for prayer. In prayer his divine nature held communion with the Father. In

prayer his human nature received help and strength from God. Jesus' prayer life proceeded from his divine nature and was a proof of his human nature. Lifting his eyes in prayer to heaven he gave sight to the blind man, lifting his eyes in prayer to heaven he received the glad assurance, "This is my beloved Son."

There is a Transforming Power for us in Prayer. "Prayer is the pouring out of the heart's deepest cravings. When you pray truly, all that is best, noblest, most exalted, purest, heavenliest in you, presses up toward God. Hence earnest prayer always lights up the very face, and lifts up the life into higher, holier mood. We grow toward that which we much desire. Hence prayer for Christ-like-ness has a transfiguring effect."

"Is that Jesus over there?" a little child asked of her teacher, pointing to an assistant superintendent, "whose face shone from talking with God." The face is made every day, says Dr. Parker, by its morning look out of the windows which open upon heaven.

They looked unto him, and were Radiant. No one can talk much with God without bearing about with him visible results of that high fellowship. Moses after he had been on the Mount with God, came down with a countenance that had caught and retained some of the divine glory. His face shone. John G. Paton, the heroic missionary, tells in his autobiography how his saintly father would withdraw every day to talk with God, and his children and his brother used to notice with wonder and awe the beautiful light upon their father's face when he came forth from that interview. Do not think me fanciful when I say that I believe that the Master's face in the morning used to proclaim plainly in what sacred communion he had been spending the night. The halo of the old painters may be fancy, but I am sure that there would be a radiance about the Saviour's face, an aspect of such unruffled serenity and calm upon his countenance, as would proclaim to all that Jesus had been spending the night in holy fellowship with God. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Model Prayer.*

We must ascend a Holy Mount. When a lecturer on electricity wants to show an example of a human body surcharged with his fire, he places a person on a stool with glass legs. The glass serves to isolate him from the earth, because it will not conduct the fire—the electric fluid. Were it not for this, however much might be poured into his frame, it would be carried away by the earth; but when thus isolated from it, he retains all that enters him. You see no fire, you hear no fire, but you are told that it is pouring into him. Presently you are challenged to the proof—asked to come near, and hold your hand close to his person. When you do so a spark of fire shoots out towards you. If thou, then, wouldst have thy soul surcharged with the fire of God, so that those who come near thee shall feel some mysterious influence proceeding out from thee, thou must draw nigh to the source of that fire, to the Throne of God, and shut thyself off from the world—that cold world which so swiftly steals our fire away. We must ascend our holy mount. *Unidentified.*

III Christianity Transfigures Faces

The Triumph of a Beautiful Soul. There is a painting of Domenico Ghirlando called "An Old Man and a Child," and very interesting is its history. One day the artist chanced to look down from his upper window and see a crowd of boys jeering an old man. He caught sight of the man's face, and truly it was repulsive, he thought, with its abnormal nose, inflamed and swollen to three times its proper size, and covered with wart-like growths. Seizing a crayon he sketched the face and roared with laughter at the comical result. A few days later he was directed to the house of "a frame-maker with a bloated nose," for he was seeking some one who could make a fine frame for one of his pictures. Up three flights he climbed, and as he paused to regain his breath at the door he heard the prattle of a child. A little boy in rich attire stood near a liveried servant; then suddenly he rushed back into the room and threw himself upon the old man who sat near a window. Ghirlando caught his breath: "Saints in heaven, what a picture!" he murmured to himself. On the little lad's face there was a look of perfect confidence, trust, love; to him the deformed old man was good and beautiful. And the old man, a sweet, true soul beaming from his eyes, a kindly smile transfiguring his face, made an impression in the artist's memory that he put on canvas. The poor old gilder and

the scion of one of the wealthiest houses of Florence—both alike pure and childlike. "When your ceilings and your St. Jeromes are forgotten," said Sandio Botticelli to him as he gazed at the wonderful picture, "this presentation of the triumph of a beautiful soul will be treasured as your master-piece."

A Repulsive Face Transfigured. Sister Agatha, a worker of the West London Mission, said of a man whom she first knew as a drunken wretch: "I don't think I ever saw in my life an expression of the human face more repulsive than Mr. Taylor's in those terrible days. We all felt the same. There was in his face something that repulsed sympathy and made the heart shudder. We did not so much fear him, or dislike him, as feel this extraordinary repulsion—as if he were inhuman."

And then one day he came to her, his face shining and transfigured. "Sister, I won't detain you," he said, in a new voice; "I only wanted to tell you what has happened. The light has come. Last night I gave my heart to God—today my tools have been wet with my tears—but they are joy tears now, for I know that all the past is forgiven."

The change was so remarkable that Sister Agatha could scarcely believe her eyes. She heard what the man said, but her mind was dazed by the look in his face. It was not the same man. The very features were changed.

"I shall never forget that moment, and neither will you, Mr. Taylor!" she afterward exclaimed, with loving remembrance. "We prayed together, and we were very happy, were we not? It was a true case of 'Once I was blind, now I see.' The light came suddenly, in a moment, and all was changed." She turned to me. "His face was transfigured. It was shining."

He told me that in the loneliness of his own room he had been thinking of his sinful and wretched life, and feeling how impossible it was for him ever to be a different man, when all of a sudden, just like a voice in his soul, he heard the announcement that Christ alone can take away the sins of a man. In a flash he saw that he had nothing to do but surrender; that he was not to strive, but to be grateful: that God was only asking him to believe, not to struggle, not to build up the ruins of his life.

"I simply gave myself to God," he said quietly. "I don't know how else to put it. I surrendered, laid down my arms, and felt all through my soul that I was pardoned and restored."

That was nine years ago. For nine years this man has not only been immune from drink, has not only made a comfortable home for his children, has not only been a first-rate workman and a good citizen, but throughout those nine years he has been, in Sister Agatha's phrase, "a worker for Christ, beloved by all, and a hiding-place for many."

If you could see the brightness of his face and feel the overflowing happiness of his heart, you would better realise the miracle of conversion. The man is a living joy. Condensed from *Souls in Action,* by *Harold Begbie.*

Changed Faces. A Japanese lady visited a missionary boarding-school one day and said to the missionary, "Tell me, does your principal take only pretty girls?" "Oh, no, indeed, she takes all girls." "But there is a different look on the faces of these girls from that seen on most Japanese girls." "That is because we cultivate the soul here," answered the gentle-voiced teacher. "Well, I'm not a Christian," said the Japanese woman; "I don't want to be, and I don't want my daughter to be a Christian—but I'd like to get that look on her face." And last autumn the daughter was placed in the mission school.

Mr. G. T. B. Davis gives a number of true stories in "Korea for Christ," which show the change that has come over the Korean Christians. One is about the woman with the happy face, told by Dr. Moffett. She lived, he says, just inside the Seven Star Gate. She was severely persecuted by her husband, who tried to keep her away from church. He would beat her for going to the meetings, but this did not deter her. Then he tried binding her, but when he released her she attended the services just as before. The next Sunday he bound and gagged her, and thought that now she was surely cured; but the following Sunday she again trudged off to the church. This persecution went on for months. During all this period she would come to the Wednesday class with such a bright, happy face that I never imagined she was suffering ill-treatment in her home. When I heard about her hardships, I asked her how she could endure it. She replied that it was because she had constant peace

and happiness in her heart. At length, however, the woman had her reward. Her husband also became a Christian. Then she was happier still, and her face shone with yet greater joy.

SENTENCE SERMONS

If we are to see anything of the glory of Christ, or of Christ in his glory, we must go apart with Christ. *A. B. Davidson.*

What a dark night it would have been if our Lord and Master had been caught up with Moses and Elijah, and no Christ had died for our sins! *D. L. Moody.*

While you talk of heavenly things, do you lead the heavenly life? *Bishop Lawrence.*

Make me beautiful within. *Socrates.*

The very countenance of a man of much prayer will often bear witness to his acquaintanceship with the mountain-height. *G. H. Knight.*

A Christian ought to wear the kind of face that it would be worth going two blocks to see. *D. L. Moody.*

Carve the face from within, not dress it from without. *W. P. Gannett.*

Fountain of Life, in thee alone is light!
Shine through our being, cleansing us of sin,
Till we grow lucid with thy presence bright,
The peace of God within. *Lucy Larcom.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

It was good for the disciples to be there. But was that the only place where it has been good for them to be with the Master? Where, in those three years, had they come to a place where it was not good to be with the Master? And is it different to-day? The hour of vision—yes, surely that is good for us, a light to shine down all the years. But no less good is it for us to walk with the Master the common paths of every day, full of common duties and anxieties and joys and truths; no less good even the dark road of sorrow. *Dr. J. R. Miller.*

Are we content to leave that vision aside as something that happened long ago on a distant mountain to some men who have been for centuries in their graves? Have we even yet tried to make our own, a real and living experience in our lives, the vision of Jesus Christ transfigured? *R. S. Parson.*

This message of Dr. Jowett's in a recent sermon is for us: I never brought to this congregation a more glorious message, he declared. I tell you we can all be transfigured, and in our own homes where people know us best they will see the radiance.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Crises in the life of Jesus.
2. Jesus' use of Old Testament prophecy.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. How much more does Mark tell us about this incident than do the other Evangelists? 2. What does Matthew call the boy? (17. 15.) 3. What answer to the disciples' question, v. 28, does Matthew give? 4. What appeal to faith did Jesus make in earlier miracles of this year's course?

Questions to think about. 1. Why was it that Peter had wanted to stay on the mountain top? 2. What does this lesson show about the need of descending to the plain? 3. Is worship ever an end in itself? 4. Does the monkish practice of a life of devotion accord with Christ's teachings? 5. Who were the disciples referred to in v. 14? 6. Where is the emphasis in "If thou canst," v. 23? 7. What is the meaning of the father's words in v. 24? (Clipping, page 432.) 8. For what should the worship of Sunday fit us? 9. What is the relation between prayer and service? 10. Will all people be cured of disease who have faith enough? (Clipping, page 434.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON IX—DECEMBER 1

THE LUNATIC BOY

Golden Text

And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth. Mark 9.23

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 9.14-29. The Lunatic Boy. **T.** Matt. 15.21-28. Power of Faith. **W.** Jas. 1.2-8. Trial of Faith. **T.** Rom. 8. 31-39. Conquering Faith. **F.** 1 John 5.1-12. Victorious Faith. **S.** Eph. 2.1-10. Source of Faith. **S.** Rom. 5.1-11. Peace Through Believing. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mark 9.14-29 READ Mt. 17.14-21; Luke 9.37-42 COMMIT vv 28, 29

14 And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great multitude about them, and scribes questioning with them. 15 And straightway all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. 16 And he asked them, What question ye with them? 17 And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; 18 and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: and he foameth, and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out; and they were not able. 19 And he answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him unto me. 20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him grievously; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. 21 And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him? And he said, From a child. 22 And oftimes it hath cast him both into the fire and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. 23 And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth. 24 Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. 25 And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. 26 And having cried out, and torn him much, he came out: and *the boy* became as one dead; insomuch that the more part said, He is dead. 27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up; and he arose. 28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, *How is it* that we could not cast it out? 29 And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14-18. *When they came to the disciples.* The other nine, who had been left at the foot of the mountain, verse 2.—*A dumb spirit.* He is epileptic, Mt. 17.15.—*Dasheth him down.* Or, *rendeth him.* See Mt. 7.6, RVm.

19-20. *Faithless generation.* The nine disciples, the father, the scribes, and the entire multitude were lacking in faith in varying degrees, and they were representative of the generation to which they belonged.—*Tare.* Or, *convulsed.* See Mk. 1.26, RVm.

23-24. *If thou canst.* The *thou* is emphatic; Jesus puts the doubt upon the father's faith.—*Said.* Many ancient authorities add *with tears,* RVm.

25-29. *Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit.* See page 300.—*And he arose.* Luke adds, all were amazed at the mighty power of God.—*How is it that we could not cast it out?* Or, *saying, We could not cast it out,* RVm.—*And he said unto*

them. Matthew gives a different answer: Because of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.—*Prayer.* Many ancient authorities add *and fasting,* RVm. Faith is the expulsive force, and faith is nourished by prayer, hence the two answers are one.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

15. *And straightway all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed.* Biography leads the reader through scenes fully as varied as those surveyed by travellers in Europe and Asia; there are heights of commanding impressiveness and lowlands with alternate fertility and sterility; we pass mountains and steppes, great torrents and placid streams. Even the life of Jesus is characterized by alternations such as these; there are great moments and crises followed by weeks crowded indeed with incidents, but incidents of a less determinative influence in shaping the course of things.

On the day following the Transfiguration, before ever Jesus could rejoin the other nine disciples, they were subjected to a test which humiliated them with a sense of impotence and failure. In the Mission of the Twelve the evangelists had apparently exercised miraculous powers of healing and of exorcism and now, when they were besought to restore an afflicted boy to health, they were unable to do so. A number of scribes had followed Jesus northward with the father of the demoniac boy, and when they witnessed the ineffectualness of the disciples' faith they began to dispute about the authority of their Master himself. Suddenly Jesus was seen approaching, and whether it was the coincidence of his arrival with the controversy about him, or that something of the majesty of his Transfiguration still lingered about his person, "immediately all the people seeing him were utterly amazed." The poet Virgil noted that "often when a tumult has arisen, and the low rabble rages in excitement,... then if they, perchance, see a man dignified by piety and services, they are silent, and stand with ears pricked up while he sways their souls with words and soothes their passions." *W. A. Grist,* in *The Historic Christ in the Faith of To-day.*

19. *O faithless generation.* He did not mean to charge them with the entire absence of all confidence but he did mean to declare that their poor, feeble faith, such as it was, was not worth naming in comparison with the abounding mass of their unbelief. There was one spark of light in them, and there was also a great heap of green wood that had not caught the flame and only smoked instead of blazing, and so he said to them, "O faithless generation!"

Ay, and if he came down here amongst us now, and went through the professing Christians in this land, to how many of us—regard being had to the feebleness of our confidence and strength of our unbelief—he would have to say the same thing, "O faithless generation!" *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

From the heavenly communion on Hermon's height Jesus and his favored disciples descended to meet an excited throng in the valley below. Mountain raptures are followed by valley responsibilities.

Assign paragraphs 46-47, 63-65, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Ask for the stanza about "Beautiful Faces," and then for these about "Beautiful Hands and Feet," learned for this lesson:

"Beautiful hands are they that do
Deeds that are noble, good and true;
Busy with them the long day through.

Beautiful feet are they that go
Swiftly to lighten another's woe,
Through summer's heat or winter's snow."

Review last Sunday's lesson, and connect it with this lesson, the leaving of the mount with its glorious vision and the lightening of woe on the plain below. Show again Raphael's picture of the Transfiguration (Perry No. 339), as you teach the lesson. Do not dwell upon the particulars of the boy's trouble. Impress the lesson of "Beautiful feet and hands." Recall by questions the vision that came to the shepherds, and how after seeing the Christ-child in the manger they returned joyfully to their work of caring for their flocks. Tell the story of the boy Samuel's vision in the night watches, and how the next morning he went to his daily task of "opening the doors of the House of the Lord." Greta was a six-year-old told about in "The Mayflower," who sorrowfully said one day that she was so little there wasn't anything, not a single thing, that she could do. "Tut!" exclaimed her grandfather, "who opens my paper and finds my spectacles and brings my book from the library table?" "And who gives puss her saucer of milk and teaches her to play so nicely with a string?" asked her father. "I know somebody who can do errands as nicely as any one," said her mother. Then sister Bell told what she knew, and Greta's eyes beamed with delight. "Every little task we do willingly makes the Lord Jesus glad in heaven," added grandmother with a happy smile.

Ask your pupils to learn Mt. 19.14 for next week.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever wish that you could go to a party every night? Suppose you could do this, wouldn't parties become dreadfully commonplace? Do you ever become so interested in some good book that you wish you might keep on reading indefinitely? Don't you think that if you could you would soon long for some active share yourself in what is going on? Is there any one thing, however pleasant, of which one would never grow weary if it were continuous? Bright, sunny days are beautiful, but one who has never spent a year in sunny California can little realize how gratefully welcome are the misty mornings in spring when the sun is hidden for a time.

So a Sunday spent in worship is a delight, but if every day were Sunday not only would one grow weary of the day but all the services would not make us better boys and girls, better men and women. It is because Monday follows Sunday, because work follows worship, because the commonplace duties of every day afford opportunities for service, that we profit from the uplift gained on Sundays, and are enabled to turn high thoughts, spiritual joys, into positive power. "Prayer alone does not make us strong; what turns prayer into strength is that we have to rise from our knees to face the ordinary duties of life."

From the raptures on the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus and the three disciples descended to the opportunities for service awaiting them below.

"Not always on the Mount may we
Rapt in the heavenly vision be;
The Mount for vision—but below
The paths of daily duty go."

For Older Pupils. An English writer was describing a great convention. God had moved mightily, he wrote; his presence had filled the gatherings with a delight never to be forgotten. At the last meeting we sang the last hymn. The chairman duly pronounced the benediction. But we did not go. We sang our hymn again and again. We sang other hymns. It seemed as though we could not leave. It was good to be there. Yet the old Scotch beadle, who had his practical eye on the gas bill, and who began turning out the lights, did us a real Christian service, for he reminded us that in the big cities and towns, and in the lonely villages throughout the land, many unprivileged and tired workers were waiting for us to translate that time into speech and action that would work for the advance of the kingdom so dear to them, to us, and to the God who had sent the blessing.

Where was it Peter had said it was good to be? What had he wished to do? To-day we learn what was going on at the base of the mountain, and how privileges always lead to service. Raphael in his famous picture of the Transfiguration has portrayed the sharp contrast between the radiance on the Mount and the darkness in the valley. (Give your class copies of it, Perry No. 339.)

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Mountain Raptures and Valley Responsibilities

Trimming the Smoking Flax. As a sympathetic teacher is quick to mark the dawning of talent, and tempts it forth by every kind of artifice, so, wherever Jesus discerned the slightest sign of faith, he trimmed the smoking flax with unfailing assiduity. Demoralized by the inability of the apostles to heal his son, the poor man had almost fallen into despair and appealed to Jesus with the unworthy phrase: "If thou canst do anything." But Jesus at once pulled him up with the rejoinder: "If thou canst: all things are possible to him that believeth." Thus did Jesus draw forth faith almost with violence; but the harsh method was successful; for the man replied with tears—and never was there a more touching example of faith struggling with unbelief and overcoming it—"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." *Dr. James Stalker,* in *The Ethics of Jesus.*

On the Mountain and on the Plain. How sharp is the contrast between our last lesson and this, between the scene on the mountain height, radiant with the glory of God, the world of the ideal, and the scene at the mountain's base, overcast by the need of man, the world of the real! And how clear is the lesson of the two combined, that the world of the ideal and the world of the real are one world, that mountain raptures are followed by valley responsibilities, that the vision of the glory of God heartens one for grappling with the problem of the good of man.

The vision may dawn, the dream may awaken, the heart may leap with a new inspiration on some mountain top, but the test, the triumph, is at the foot of the mountain, on the level plain, Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock writes. The workshop of character is everyday life. The uneventful and commonplace hour is where the battle is won or lost.

"I have been for five years on the Mount of Transfiguration," exclaimed a man in one of Mr. Moody's meetings. "How many souls did you lead to Christ last year?" "Why, I don't know," the astonished man replied. "Have you led any?" persisted Mr. Moody. "I don't know that I have," the man answered. "Well," said Mr. Moody, "we don't want that kind of mountain-top experience."

The Sanctified Life and the Serviceable Life are One. Jesus teaches no ascent of ethics which leaves one on the Mount. His source of power is above, but his use of power is below. A slow ascent of duty to the horizon of God, a quick glance, a long breath, a far-away look, and then the descent of faith to the plains of human need—such is the picture of the life of Jesus. *Professor Peabody,* in *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.*

The Lesson of True Religion. An American tourist spending a few days at Oberammergau, the summer of 1909, witnessed the martyr-play of "Sebastian," which was performed partly to keep the actors in practice and partly as a means of testing candidates for the leading places in the play of 1910. One of the most prominent of these parts was that of the mother of the two Christians, Marcellus and Marcelinus; and in this character the visitor recognized no other than the nineteen-year-old damsel who had poured his coffee in the home where he was a guest.

Nothing in the play impressed him as did the acting of this young woman. Her thrilling, sobbing tones, as she pleaded with her younger son to renounce his faith and save his life and her breaking heart, went to the heart of the beholder: *"Mein Marcelline! Mein Sohn! Mein Kind!"* More than once she moved him to tears with the tragic power of her acting.

When the play was over and he returned to his domicil, he asked his hostess, "Where is our little Immanuella? I wish to see her and congratulate her upon her acting."

"Come," said the German housewife. "We will find her."

She led him to the kitchen, and there, seated flat on the floor beside the open oven of the great tile stove, sat the heroine of an hour before, her face flushed, not with pride of her acting, but with the heat of the oven, as she basted the goose that was to serve as their supper. And when the supper was served, she stood again behind the chair of the visitor, and filled his cup, and did the humble service of a peasant maiden.

How many American girls after reading their graduation essays would have hurried home, folded up their white dresses, laid their diplomas in the bureau drawer, and cooked the home supper?

It is one of the lessons of true religion that we are not only to rise to the achievement of great things, but that we are to be faithful in the things that are least. Not less in the kitchen than on the stage did the fräulein of Oberammergau teach the lesson of the Christian witness to the spirit of the gospel. *Youth's Companion.*

II I Believe: Help Thou mine Unbelief

The Father's Faith. One thing is certain: the man knew what he wanted. And he wanted it very sorely. He felt his sense of utter helplessness. How often this poor father had looked at his boy in the grip of the fiend, and had wrung his hands in despair that he could do nothing for him. It was this sense of absolute impotence that urged him to seek divine help. If only he could believe in the omnipotence of Jesus! How those words must have sounded in his ear, giving birth to the faith which was trembling in his heart. "If thou canst! Do not say that to me. I can. And because I can, all things are possible for thee to receive." As soon as the consciousness of belief dawned upon the father, and the effort to exercise it was put forth, there sprang up the consciousness of its own imperfection. He would never have known that he did not believe unless he had tried to believe. "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." The man's desire for the moment was not so much that his faith might be increased, as that his unbelief, which he recognizes as the barrier to the healing of his child, might be removed. His words mean rather—"Help my child, though it is unbelief as much as faith that asks thee to do it." It is the intense longing of a father's love that breaks forth in his distracted cry. *Great Texts of the Bible.*

Fidelity to Incomplete Faith. I have one assurance, wrought both by observation and experience, that the foundations of a safe religious and Christian belief are constitutionally laid in the heart of every man. That they are there, not because we have constructed them by any process of our own thought, but because they are implanted by an act of divine endowment, and that the difficulties of faith are due primarily, if not altogether, to the habit of taking our feet off from ground that we feel to be firm, and instead of taking constant counsel with as much of truth as we are assured of, neglecting our convictions and making a confidant only of our doubts and misgivings.

If you have a bud on your rose-bush that you want to have blossom, the last device you would think of resorting to would be to detach the bud from the stalk and to toss it into the air. And yet that is precisely what hosts of young men and young women are doing to-day who are questioning,—which is perfectly proper,—but who are nipping the fiber of connection that would unite what they do doubt with what they do not doubt, and so of course their doubts never become faith, cannot become faith. Buds of doubt do not blossom and become conviction when separated from the live stalk of assurance any more than rosebuds become rose blossoms when cut from the living stalk of the bush.

It is the habit of dwelling more constantly on what may seem to us mysterious and uncertain in regard to the meaning and character of Christ, than on those features of him that are easy to understand and that we are able cordially to assent to, that is preventing people all around us from coming thoroughly and restfully under the power of Christ. Never mind how wide the encompassing sea of mystery, but build on your little island, which, after all, is a good deal of an island. Let what you do not believe in alone. You believe in Christ's holiness. Stand by that and let there be fostered in your heart the spirit of holiness. You believe in Christ's love; let there be fostered in your heart the spirit of a pure affection, animating you in all your dealings. That is an acceptance of Christ, and is enough for a beginning, and is as much as the first disciples were equal to at the outset. In other words, do not try to be accomplished theologians, but strive to be Christians in incarnating in your own character and life the personal truth and charm that were illustrated in the Christ.

"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him." Condensed from *A Little Lower Than the Angels,* by *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

The Growth of Faith. A single thread of wire, three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, was hung from tower to tower across the East River in New York. It looked like a mere spider's web. And yet this little wire was the beginning of a great bridge that now spans that river, where four huge cables, each one composed of seven thousand six hundred and ninety-six wires twisted into a rope eighteen inches in diameter, support the structure. About that first slender wire thread, strand after strand was woven, and now five thousand tons of wire are woven into those four cables.

The Christian starts out in his spiritual life as weak as that single thread of wire, but around his little faith and little knowledge, he may throw strand after strand of greater spiritual vision, greater grasp of spiritual truths, until he becomes a tower of Christian strength, reaching out toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The Words of a Man Determined to have Faith. I am determined, God helping me, that no man shall rob me of my faith. I won't hide it away. I'll keep it right around with me, if I can. I will see it gets exercise. I will feed it all I can, so that it shall not starve. I won't force it if I can avoid it, and make it weedy and weakling. It shall say no things it does not believe. When in real danger, if I can, I will go to some one stronger than I to help to keep it safe. But when that necessity arises to whom shall I look for help? Surely directly to him who I believe gave it to me. For I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep it against that day. *Dr. W. T. Grenfell,* in *A Man's Faith.*

III. The Power of Faith through Prayer

Prayer a Means to Faith. "How is it that we could not cast it out?" "Because of your unbelief." The energy that was wanting was the energy of faith. We have no other power with which to confront the empire of deviltry. We have minor forces which may co-operate with faith, but without faith they are almost as inefficient as a pair of bellows without a fire.

What is faith? Faith is a restful realization of the gracious and almighty presence of the eternal God. The very pith and marrow of faith is the realization of God. But faith is more than a realization of God. It is a restful realization of God. It knits the life together in restful realization of God and in that quiet and fruitful assurance we become so identified with God as to be mighty to cast out devils. How is this faith to be acquired? What are the means to its culture? Our Lord provides the answer in the words of the text. The means to the culture of faith is prayer.

Prayer is "the practice of the presence of God." Prayer becomes the means of mutual communication between me and God. I communicate to him an aspiration; he communicates to me an inspiration. And so we find the Master saying, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." In the life of the spirit we begin to expire the moment we cease to aspire. Spiritual aspiration makes spiritual expiration impossible. "Men ought always to pray" and they would never faint. Prayer is a means to the restful realization of the Eternal, and so is a means to the culture of faith. Condensed from *The Folly of Unbelief,* by *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

How God answers Prayer to-day. A colporteur in Mexico was one day attacked and severely beaten, in a lonely place in the mountains. His money was taken away, and he was bound to a tree so tightly that the rope cut into his flesh. There he remained about eight hours, until a mule driver cut him free.

The next day he shouldered his pack of Bibles and walked on, as he had no money to pay for mule hire. The books weighed over a hundred pounds, and he was weakened by the previous day's experience, so that after a time his strength failed. Kneeling by the roadside he prayed aloud, telling God his trouble and asking for aid. When he opened his eyes he found a man standing by him, who said, "How beautifully you pray! Those men yonder with the burros will carry your load for you." This they did and the prayer was answered.

Mrs. Hamilton, who tells this story in her report of the Bible Society work, says, "And this 'traveler for Christ' told the story as if it were just an every-day occurrence." *Woman's Missionary Friend.*

The Condition back of the Prayer of Faith. Suppose a father nowadays were to say: "My child is sore vexed with sickness. I long for his recovery. I believe that Christ can heal him. I believe that he will. I pray in faith and I know that I shall be answered." Such a prayer goes beyond the record. Has Christ told you that it is his will that your child shall be healed? If not, how can you pray in faith that it is? You may pray in confidence that he will be healed, but such confident persuasion is not faith. Faith lays hold of Christ's distinct declaration of his will, but such confidence is only grasping a shadow, your own wishes. The father in this story was entitled to trust, because Christ told him that his trust was the condition of his son's being healed. So in response to the great word of our text, the man's faith leaped up and grasped our Lord's promise, with "Lord, I believe!" But before Christ spoke, his desires, his wistful longing, his imploring cry for help, had no warrant to pass into faith, and did not so pass. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren,* in *Gospel of St. Mark.*

A True Instance of the Power of Faith through Prayer. In "Souls in Action" Mr. Harold Begbie describes a little community of the West London Mission, which meets twice a week in the room of a Board School, and after the singing of hymns and prayers for God's assistance, goes out into the open air and holds a service in one of the wretchedest streets east or west, north or south, in the whole of the metropolis.

Among these humble people there is one older than the rest, a woman of forty, crippled, deformed, and dwarf-like, who sits in a bath-chair at the open door of the room in the Board School—the chair is too wide to enter—and afterwards, still in her chair—for she has no power of motion—occupies a place with the little group of humanity in front of the hymn-sheet at the street-corner. She lives far away from the scene of this mission's activity. Two of the young men go twice a week to the place where she lives, carry her down the stairs, place her in the chair, draw her to the Board School, lift her chair and all, up three or four flights of winding stairs to the room, and after the meeting carry her down again, take her to the service, and afterwards bear her back to her distant dwelling. They never complain of this labor. Mr. Price Hughes described this interesting person many years ago as "the only carriage lady in the Mission."

Later on in his book Mr. Begbie gives her account of her conversion, of her prayer that she might be of service in her Master's work, and how it was answered.

"I wanted to be useful, wanted to spread the knowledge of his love, wanted to make his light so shine before men that they might glorify his Father which is in heaven. But what could I do? I was but a poor little cripple, bound to work from early morning till late at night for my living; I wasn't clever, I wasn't good to look at, and I couldn't get about—even if I had had the leisure to comfort unhappy people and try to stop the bad from living without God. So what could I do? Well, there was one thing. I could pray for God to show me how I might serve him.

"And that prayer was answered, too. I was back in London, working hard, and just talking quietly at home about the change in my thoughts, and not knowing how I could serve my Saviour, but praying for it, when one evening I heard some singing in the street, and looking out of the window saw a few people with a harmonium at the corner, and heard them singing a hymn I knew. It came to me that here was my chance. Those people, I thought to myself, have felt what I have felt; they have been wanting to serve the Master; and this is how they do it—standing at a street-corner and reminding people by their presence that there is a God, that there is a life after death, and that Christ came into the world to save sinners. This is what I should like to do, and this is what I can do, if only I can get somebody to carry me down. And that is how I came to join the West London Mission, from its very start, and since I joined it I've been so happy I can't tell you what it has been to me. I don't suffer anything like the pain I used to do, and my mind is never miserable and moping. I feel as if I've got a meaning in the world, and the chance of being

useful in life. And the people who come to us in the streets help me to be quite certain that we are serving Christ."

SENTENCE SERMONS

The whole duty of man is not to enjoy God forever, but to descend with the grace of God to the help of man. *Professor F. G. Peabody.*

Faith heals only because it brings us into union with his power: faith is the hand which receives the blessing. *Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

The mountain and the plain have each its place in Christian life—the mountain for the clear vision ahead, the lowly road along the plain for the actual performance of the journey. *Dr. H. C. Trumbull.*

Prayer is inspiration on a hill-top for new toiling on the plain. *Dr. M. D. Babcock.*

We should be suspicious of the piety which does not know service, of the prayer which does not lead to work, of the mysticism which begins and ends in its own emotions. *Professor Hugh Black.*

If God made no response, except to perfect faith, who could hope for help? He is the God of sprouting seeds and little beginnings. *Dr. M. D. Babcock.*

"Beautiful lives are those that bless—
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few may guess."

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

If we are giving anxious thought to the amount of our belief, let us rather take careful heed to its quality and its tendency. Has it the vital quality that makes it grow as the mustard seed grows? We know that the disciples themselves were led through little faith to great faith; their faith was educated and enlarged under the master's instruction and influence. It is a comforting thought for us that God can take this little faith of ours and lead us through a life of obedience to his will into that greater faith which trusts him wholly and unreservedly.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The world of faith. See *The Outlook,* June 25, '10, page 368; March 25, '11.
2. Faith-cures.
3. The right of the world to censure the Church that is not a power against the forces of evil.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. To what does "In that hour" refer? 2. What does the verb "cause to stumble" mean? (Clipping, p. 437.) 3. What was the millstone, v. 6, that Jesus had in mind? (Clipping, p. 437.) 4. Tell the story of Christ blessing little children. (Mk. 10.13-16.) 5. When was the last time that a strife arose among the disciples as to which of them should be accounted greatest? (Lk. 22.24.) 6. By what act did Jesus teach that greatness lies in service? 7. Look for the word Humility in the Subject-Index of your Bible, and find and learn a verse that applies to this lesson.

Questions to think about. 1. How can one be a "stumbling block" in the Christian life of another? 2. What is the meaning of vv. 8 and 9? (Clipping, p. 437.) 3. What effect might their special privilege over the other disciples have upon the three who witnessed the Transfiguration? 4. What effect might that fact have upon the other disciples? 5. How did John the Baptist show the humble spirit of a child? 6. What characteristics of a little child must one have to enter the kingdom? 7. In the wilderness what kind of greatness had Jesus been tempted to seek? 8. What is a great man or woman? 9. What great men or women do you admire?

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON X—DECEMBER 8

THE CHILD IN THE MIDST

Golden Text

In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. Mt. 18.10

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 18.1-14. The Child in the Midst. **T.** Mark 10.13-16. Jesus Blesses Little Children. **W.** Matt. 20.20-28. Avenue to Greatness. **T.** Phil. 2.5-11. Greatness through Humility. **F.** 1 Pet. 5.1-11. Girded with Humility. **S.** Heb. 1.6-14. Ministering Angels. **S.** Ps. 131. Simplicity of Soul. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 18.1-14 READ Mark 9.33-37; Luke 9.46-48 COMMIT vv 2, 3

1. In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is greatest
in the kingdom of heaven? 2 And he called to him a little child, and set him
in the midst of them, 3 and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and be-
come as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4
Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the
greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoso shall receive one such little
child in my name receiveth me: 6 but whoso shall cause one of these little ones
that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone
should be hanged about his neck, and *that* he should be sunk in the depth of the
sea.
7 Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs
be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion
cometh! 8 And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and
cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather
than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. 9 And if
thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good
for thee to enter into life with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast
into the hell of fire. 10 See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I
say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father
who is in heaven. 12 How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one
of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the
mountains, and seek that which goeth astray? 13 And if so be that he find it,
verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine
which have not gone astray: 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father who
is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *In that hour.* Matthew connects this conversation with the episode of the tribute money, 17.22-27. Mark tells us that Jesus had asked the disciples about their dispute. Read Mark 9.23-37 and Lk. 9.46-48.—*Then.* See p. 438.—*Greatest.* Greek, *greater,* RVm.—*The kingdom of heaven.* The disciples have an earthly empire in mind.

2-4. *A little child.* They were in Peter's house at Capernaum (Mk.) and the child may have been his. There is a tradition that it was Ignatius.—*Set him in the midst.* The very fact that the little child did not realize that he was a model to them, made him their model.—*Except ye turn.* From their false ambition and jealousy.—*Become as little children.* Who are by nature humble.—*Ye shall in no wise enter.* The double Greek negative is very emphatic: Jesus tells them that it is not a question of their being the greatest in the kingdom but of their even entering the kingdom at all.—*Humble himself as this little child.* See p. 440.—*Greatest.* Greek, *greater,* RVm.

5-6. *One such little child.* One who is child-like in humility.—*In my name.* For my sake.—*Receiveth me.* We honor Christ by honoring those who are Christ-like. *To stumble.* The Greek verb σκανδαλίσῃ, translated here "cause to stumble" and in the A. V. "offend," is the verb from which our word "scandal" is derived, which means literally a snare laid for an enemy, for the Greek noun σκάνδαλον, occasion of stumbling, verse 7, is the name of the upright stick in a trap on which the bait is fastened which, when touched by an animal, causes the trap to close over it. "Offences are traps to entice and betray unwary disciples, they are stumbling-blocks laid in the path that leads to Christ and heaven, in order to make those who would follow Christ lose their way" (*Stalker*).—*Profitable.* Death is better than the guilt of ruining another soul.—*A great millstone.* Greek, *a millstone turned by an ass,* RVm. See below.

7. *It must needs be that the occasions come.* Occasions for stumbling, temptations, are necessary to prove us.—*That man through whom the occasion cometh.* Being tempted is not sin (it is the yielding that is sin), but creating temptations for others is a great sin.

8-9. *Thy hand or thy foot...thine eye.* By a common figure of speech, the organ of doing is put for the thing done, that of seeing for the thing seen.—*Causeth thee to stumble.* "If that which your eye sees or your hand does, occasions you to sin either against others or against yourself, then renounce that thing so thoroughly that it shall become to you as though it were annihilated. It is not to be taken literally. In the reign of Bloody Mary, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was led to the stake, and, raising the hand which in a moment of weakness had subscribed to the dogmas of the Papal Supremacy and the Real Presence, exclaimed, 'This unworthy hand hath offended!' and then thrust that hand into the flames of the fagots. Cranmer's hand was no more to be blamed for having subscribed to the doctrine of Rome than it was to be praised for having transcribed the four Evangelists. The guilt was not is the hand; the guilt was in the soul that wielded the hand" (*George Dana Boardman*).—*Halt.* Lame.—*The eternal fire.* The future punishment.—*Hell of fire.* Greek, *Gehenna of fire,* RVm. See page 438.

10. *Their angels do always behold the face of my Father.* Their guardian angels are of the highest rank, for in an oriental court only such are admitted to the king's presence: the meaning is that God has for the little ones, the lowly ones, of his kingdom a special interest: it is not his will that one of them should perish, v. 14. Many authorities, some ancient, insert verse 11: For the Son of man came to save that which was lost. See Lk. 19.10, RVm.

12-14. This parable was also spoken on a later occasion to a different audience for a different purpose, Lk. 15.4-7. Here it is given to teach his disciples that, like the Good Shepherd, their love must lead them to seek to reclaim those who go astray: there it is given to rebuke the Pharisees who objected to the example of the Good Shepherd.—*Leave the ninety and nine.* See page 438. —*Not the will of your Father.* Greek, *a thing willed before your Father,* RVm. —*Your.* Some ancient authorities read *my,* RVm.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *Become as little children.*

We wander wide through evil years,
Our eyes of faith grow dim;
But he is freshest from his hands
And nearest unto him. *Whittier.*

5. *Whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble.* This transition of thought from *being* like a child to receiving all that of which childhood in its weakness is the emblem, was perfectly natural; for there is a close connection between the selfish struggle to be great and an offensive mode of acting towards the little. Harshness and contemptuousness are vices inseparable from an ambitious spirit. *Dr. A. B. Bruce.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

6. *A great millstone.* The ordinary way of grinding grain was to put it be-

tween two stones. Two women turned the upper stone about the fixed lower one in this hand-mill. The Greek word for millstone in this verse means the large, heavy, upper millstone of large mills which were turned by asses.

6. *Sunk in the depth of the sea.* Punishment by drowning was a practice of Romans, Greeks, and Syrians. According to St. Jerome, this was the punishment meted out by the Romans to some of the leaders of the insurrection under Judas of Galilee.

9. *The hell of fire.* Several of our lessons last year taught us that "hell" is "Gehenna," the Greek word for the Valley of Hinnom, the ravine on the south side of Jerusalem which was sometimes called Tophet, whence our expression "as hot as Tophet." In the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh children were offered here in sacrifice to the god Molech. King Josiah had human bones thrown here, thus making it ceremonially unclean, and later the refuse of the city was thrown into it, and this necessitated the keeping of fires constantly burning to consume it. Therefore it gave its name to the place of future punishment, spoken of as having its fire never quenched.

12. *If any man have a hundred sheep.* I do not remember ever to have seen in the East a flock of sheep without a shepherd. In such a landscape as Judea, where pasture is thinly scattered over an unfenced tract of country, covered with delusive paths, still frequented by the wild beasts, and rolling off into the desert, the man and his character are indispensable. On some high moor, across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him, sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, armed, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why Christ took him as the type of self-sacrifice. *Dr. George Adam Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

From the neighborhood of Mount Hermon and Cæsarea Philippi Jesus and the disciples returned to Capernaum. The men who collected the half-shekel for the temple came to Peter and asked him if his Teacher paid the tax. Jesus questioned Peter whether kings received tribute from their sons or from strangers, and when Peter replied "From strangers," Jesus then declared, "Therefore the sons are free"; the Son of God owed no tax for God's temple. But lest their refusal to pay should cause trouble, Jesus bade Peter cast a hook into the sea, and in the mouth of the first fish he caught he would find a shekel which would pay the tax for both of them.

This incident is followed in Matthew by the first verse of our lesson; "in that hour" the disciples came to Jesus saying, "Which, then, is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" In this connection it would seem that the "then" shows their thought that Peter, so signally honored, might be the greatest. Mark tells us that the disciples had been disputing among themselves on the way to Capernaum as to which of them was the greatest, and that on entering the house, perhaps that of Peter, Jesus asked them what they had been "reasoning on the way." Possibly the nine disciples had been jealous because of the special favor shown the three on the Mount of Transfiguration, and the three had been unduly elated over the preference shown them. Jesus had repeated on the way his prophecy of his coming death and resurrection: his disciples perhaps, had thought of the events to be as in some mysterious way connected with the establishment of the kingdom, and from that their thoughts had run to their own personal place in that kingdom.

We shall miss the force of this lesson if we see in it only a series of unrelated topics. Throughout it all there is a continuity of thought. See the Lesson Briefly Told.

Assign paragraphs 78-79, 96-99, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Jesus the Friend of Little Children is your theme to-day. To verses 1-6 and 12-14 (omitting 7-11) add Mt. 19.13-15. Show Tissot's picture No. 53, Jesus and a Little Child. To explain verse 6 tell about the poor woman in a London park who stopped and picked up something which she quickly hid in her apron.

A policeman saw her and thought she had found a purse that she was going to keep. He called to her roughly: "Here, there, what have you got in your apron?" and said that he would arrest her if she did not show him. The poor, frightened woman opened her apron and the policeman saw in it a handful of broken glass. "What in the world do you want of that rubbish?" he asked in surprise. "I just thought I'd take it out of the way of the children's feet," she replied. That woman had a very kind heart for little children. When Jesus spoke about not causing the little ones to stumble he meant that just as that poor woman would not leave anything in the children's path to hurt their feet, so others should not put anything in their way that would cause them to do wrong. Have your pupils repeat Mt. 19.14, and also these stanzas:—

"I think, when I hear that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How he called little children like lambs to his fold—
I should like to have been with him then.

I wish that his hands had been laid on my head,
That his arms had been thrown around me,
And that I might have seen his sweet look when he said,
'Let the little ones come unto me.'"

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Last year on the 22d of June the King and Queen of England were crowned in Westminster Abbey, and eight days later they entertained one hundred thousand children at the Crystal Palace. What a great party that was! How the little folks cheered and clapped their hands, and how happy they were on that wonderful occasion! Here is the chorus of a song that not only they but all the boys and girls throughout the King's empire sang. The title of the song is "King George, the Children's Friend."

O King of kings! our sov'reign bless,
For whom our thanks ascend!
This festal day we celebrate—
King George—*The Children's Friend!*

It is about King Jesus, the Greatest Children's Friend, the Friend not only of the English boys and girls but of boys and girls the whole world over, that we study to-day. Through all the time that Jesus was talking with his disciples and telling them many things, he held close to him a little child. What was the question the disciples asked which made him call this little child to him?

For Older Pupils. Aftr recalling the Historical Background, consider this thought brought up by President Rufus M. Jones in "Practical Christianity":—

It is interesting and instructive to notice the kind of questions which the disciples and others asked the Master when he was with them in person. They very seldom came to him to ask about the great central truths. They are concerned with times and seasons. When is this new kingdom coming? Are we to sit on exalted seats in the kingdom? Whose sin made this man blind? Ought we to pay tribute to Cæsar? What does he mean by "a little while"? Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? Why could not we cast the devil out? In what mountain shall we pray? These are some of the familiar questions, and they often break in upon him when he is unfolding some deep spiritual truth, with a question which shows that their thought was about the husk, while he was concerned with the inner kernel.

But what should we ask him to-day, if he stood in our streets, or came to eat at our tables? One can imagine the pushing crowd about him to-day, asking the questions which are uppermost. Shall we use fermented or unfermented wine in our communion service? Lord, when art thou coming a second time? Is the Bible really an inspired book, and is every word literally true? Shall we employ doctors or shall we be healed by faith? He would undoubtedly look sadly upon us and say: "I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now."

The questions we ask show better than anything else the height of our lives. The wiser a man is the wiser will his questions be. So, too, the more spiritual

a man is the more profound and important will his problems be. Paul saw Christ for one blessed moment, and his question concerned his whole career; "What shall I do, Lord?" and the answer came, "I will show thee." Let us put away childish things and ask for light on the subjects which really concern our soul and our relation to him who is Life and Love.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Who is Greatest?

The Meaning of Jesus' Answer. Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. The disciples with their love for the preëminence must turn sharply around and face the other way, the way of humility, teachableness, obedience, love. Happily, contentedly and self-unconsciously said a little child to me once in response to questions which he evidently deemed too numerous: "I don't know everything; I only know a little." That is the child's spirit which Jesus places in contrast to the disciples' spirit. Two things must be kept in mind in considering Jesus' words: first, that he is talking about entering the kingdom, not about growth in the kingdom; and second, that it is not childishness, but childlikeness, that he commends.

Professor Francis Greenwood Peabody, in "Jesus Christ and the Christian Character," well explains Jesus' meaning in these words. Jesus does not say that the childlike spirit is inherently better than the spirit of the man. He does not promise that it shall possess or govern the kingdom. He affirms only that it is the condition of entering the kingdom. It is not that the child is better than the man, but that the child stands at the gate of the ideal and takes the first step toward the Christian character. Docility, receptivity, open-mindedness, the eager, listening spirit of the little child—this is the polar opposite of the unteachable, satiated, closed heart of the Pharisee, and as the latter blocks the way to the kingdom, so the former opens it. Better things than childhood has to offer are to be gained through the discipline and stress of life, yet entrance to the kingdom is attained by no other door than the unspoiled, natural, spontaneous spirit of the child, and many a sophisticated and unteachable life will find with a shock of surprise that it has lost the key.

A Hard Lesson for the Disciples. This lesson in regard to greatness was a hard one for the disciples to learn. As they were approaching Jerusalem on that final journey, when Jesus' thoughts were about his coming sacrifice, the disciples were still thinking about their own pre-eminence. James and John made a request, nothing less than that their Master would grant them to sit, one on his right hand, and one on his left hand, in his glory. "Me first" was what each one meant. When the other disciples heard what they had asked, they were very indignant. Then said Jesus: "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all. For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And then in that upper room at Jerusalem, on that last night, Jesus washed his disciples' feet to teach them by this example that greatness lies in service. The disciples learned the lesson at last.

One who loved to have the Pre-eminence and One who overcame that Love. After the battle of Marathon all Athens was talking about Miltiades, the victorious general, praising his valor and skill. So jealous was Themistocles that he shut himself up to avoid hearing about his rival. "Yea," says Plutarch "he got no rest day nor night, neither would he frequent festivals, nor keep company with his friends. And when asked what was the matter with him and what ailed him, this was his reply, "Miltiades' victory would not let me sleep." Themistocles could not bear to see another given a greater place than he in the kingdom.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, one of the most modest and most sweet-spirited of men, recently told of a time when he was tempted to be envious and how he gained the victory. "It was easy," he said, " to pray for the success of Campbell Morgan when he was in America. But when he came back to England and took a church near mine it was somewhat different. The old Adam in me was inclined to jealousy, but I got my heel upon his head and whether I felt right toward my friend, I determined to act right. My church gave a reception for

him and I acknowledged that if it was not necessary for me to preach Sunday evenings I would dearly love to go and hear him myself. Well, that made me feel right towards him. But just see how the dear Lord helped me out of my difficulty. There was Thomas Spurgeon preaching wonderfully on the other side of me. He and Mr. Morgan were so popular and drew such crowds, that our church caught the overflow, and we had all we could accommodate."

Yale University's Class of 1853's Estimate of Greatness. Recently when the class of 1853 had the opportunity of selecting from among the names of those who had died two names to be honored by tablets in the Memorial Hall, they chose those of Dr. Charles Harding, who died a missionary in India, and of Rev. Hiram Bingham, who gave over fifty years to missionary service in the Sandwich Islands and Micronesia. In his address of presentation, the Hon. Andrew D. White, formerly our ambassador to Germany, said: "Among the classmates we have lost were others in church, in state, in literature, in scholarship, who held places which the world considered higher than the places held by either of these men, as things go in this world. And yet, when we wish to leave with our *alma mater* the names which she must not willingly let die, we have named these two. We have named them because their ideals were the highest, and because they sacrificed most to make those ideals real. Men like these have given the world something better than any material success. These two classmates of ours gave to our land, to us, to all our thinking fellow citizens, something of the spirit of Saint Paul, something of the spirit, we may say reverently, of Christ himself."

II Causing the Little Ones to Stumble

The Friend of Little Children. "I love God and Little Children" is the motto inscribed on the Children's Temple at Mont-Lawn. He who loves God must love little children, is the teaching of Jesus. Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me, he declared. See that ye despise not one of these little ones.

It is known that there are more than eight million children in the United States between the ages of five and fifteen, who have never been enrolled in any Sunday-school, either Protestant or Catholic. It has been said that in the city of New York alone there are at least one-half million children who receive no religious training. At the Child Welfare Exhibition held in New York last year, one of the first pictured scenes which met the eye upon entering read: "All Faiths agree that 'Righteousness Exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a Reproach to any People.' To secure Civic Righteousness, the Home, the School, the Church must work Together in the Training of the City's Children."

The Confessions of a Chinese Father. At a recent service at Changli the Chinese pastor arose and in a broken voice said: "I want to say that my heart is troubled because God's Spirit has shown me a sin. I have hesitated to confess it, but I know I must. You all know I have several little children. I must tell you that I have been impatient with them, have sometimes struck them. I had forgotten that they are not mine to do with as I pleased. I had forgotten they are God's little ones."

"A Chinese father confessing to such a peccadillo as this!" comments the missionary. "It was as if Christ again took a little child and enthroned him in the midst."

A Newer World for the Child. Recently I heard Rabbi Stephen S. Wise give an address upon this subject, and from it I quote the following striking sentences:

The New World for the Child consists of two elements, the new child and the newer world. The world is no newer than is the child we are beginning to know. This new world for the child has come through the rise of new industrialism, and we are not so sure it is accompanied by blessings for him. This is not so much the age of the child's rights as it is of the righting of the child's wrongs. We are dealing to-day not only with the children of the poor, but also with the children of the rich, for they, too, have rights, one of the chief among them the right not to be spoiled.

The first right of all children is the right to be well born. No child is well born who is born into the home of an overworked father or an underfed mother,

or with an inheritance which works against the child's leading a wholesome life. The right to play is another sacred right of childhood, as is also the right not to be treated as a criminal. There are no criminal children. Those termed such are the victims of a wicked diagnosis of grown-ups who don't understand child psychology. And one of the supreme rights of the child is the right to live in a home, and to be kept out of an institution. The time is coming when there will be no orphan asylums except as receiving stations. Homeless children are only intended for childless homes.

There is no such thing as child labor, for the moment the child labors he ceases to be a child. There are two spectacles in this country of ours that are a menace to democracy—the great army of unemployed adults and the great army of employed children. There are two conclusions regarding the child labor question—if it is unpreventable, then our democracy is bankrupt; if it is preventable, then it is not the democracy, but it is we who are morally and religiously bankrupt. Child labor is sectional, but the right of the child not to labor is national. The Northerner who makes his dividends in the mills of the South, where child labor prevails, is not separated from his guilt by the distance of his dividends. We have been protecting infant industries, and now we are going to protect infants from industries. It is often said that the test of civilization is its treatment of its women. A better test, I think, is a nation's treatment of its children. The child's hour has struck, not only for the children of luxury but for the children of all men.

A Prayer for Children who work. O Thou great father of the weak, lay thy hand tenderly on all the little children on earth and bless them. Bless our own children who are the life of our life, and who have become the heart of our heart. Bless every little child-friend who has leaned against our knee, and refreshed our soul by its smiling trustfulness. Be good to all children who crave in vain for human love or for flowers and water, and the sweet breast of Nature. But bless with a three-fold blessing the young lives whose slender shoulders are already bowed beneath the yoke of toil, and whose glad growth is being stunted for ever. Let not their little bodies be utterly sapped, and their minds given over to stupidity and the vices of an empty soul. We have all jointly deserved the millstone of thy wrath for making these little ones to stumble and fall. Grant all employers of labor stout hearts to refuse enrichment at such a price. Grant to all the citizens and officers of States which now permit this wrong the grace of holy anger. Help us to realise that every child in our nation is in very truth our child, a member of our great family. Save us, we beseech thee, from killing the sweetness of young life by the greed of gain. *Professor Walter Rauschenbusch,* in *The American Magazine.*

III The Ninety and Nine and the One

The Infinite Worth of the One. I thought perhaps he would not have troubled about *one.* If he had had two sheep, and had lost one, I could have understood his concern, but to lose one out of a hundred would seem to be an almost insignificant loss. That is the line of reasoning which we sometimes introduce into our affairs. We reason as if the loss of one is lessened in its painfulness by the many that remain. We hear of some parents who have lost a little child, a fountain of joy and cheer. We compassionately inquire: "Have they any children left?" "Yes, they have four left." "Ah, well, it isn't so great a loss as if they had only one." That indicates a common principle of reasoning—the greater the family, the less the value of the individual soul. We carry the reasoning forward into the religious sphere, and it becomes the parent of depression and doubt. It creates the most terrible of all orphanhoods, the fear that there are so many of us that the individual does not count. *Dr. J. H. Jowett,* in *The Folly of Unbelief.*

How Mr. Sankey composed the Music for this Hymn. Everyone knows the beautiful hymn beginning "There were Ninety and Nine," but not so well known is the way in which Mr. Sankey composed the music. As he and Mr. Moody were about to take the train from Glasgow to Edinburgh, where they were to hold meetings, he purchased at a news-stand a paper which he hoped would give news from home, but when he found that it was chiefly filled with Henry Ward Beecher's sermons he threw it down in the railway carriage, for,

From the Memorial Window to Ira D. Sankey
THE SAVIOUR BRINGING HIS LOST SHEEP

he says, he had been having plenty of sermons—three sermons a day for nine months. After awhile he picked up the paper and found in one corner the words of this now famous hymn. He cut it out and placed it in a scrapbook which he carried about with him. The second day of the meetings in Edinburgh Mr. Moody talked about "the Good Shepherd" and then called upon Dr. Horatius Bonar to speak. "What an address he gave!" said Mr. Sankey, recalling the incident. "He talked so kindly and so tenderly that, before he finished, the Good Shepherd, the Saviour, was in all our hearts."

When Dr. Bonar finished Mr. Moody asked Mr. Sankey to sing an appropriate solo. "I could have sung the twenty-third Psalm," said Mr. Sankey, "but that had been sung twice already in that meeting." Then like an inspiration came the thought to him, "Sing the hymn you found in the paper—the hymn without a tune." He opened his old scrapbook, and with every one in that great hall awaiting his song, he breathed a silent prayer, "God help me." "Then," he says, "I laid my hands on the keys of the little organ and struck a chord in A flat, and the first strain of the hymn floated through the hall. I started in and God did help me; he gave me the notes as I needed them. Then it suddenly dawned upon me, 'Can I repeat the same notes for the other verses?' Naturally the same notes came, and by the time I had reached the fifth and last verse, I had learned the tune, the same one, in every respect, that has been used now for more than a quarter of a century."

This became one of the most famous of all Mr. Sankey's hymns, and the beautiful memorial window which Mrs. Sankey gave to the church where he belonged, pictures in the center the Good Shepherd with the lost sheep in his arms. The picture is reproduced with this lesson.

The Boy's Reasoning. It is said that a lad after being taught the lesson of the ninety and nine went home and told his father that he wanted to "be in the fold," he wanted to become a Christian. "Oh, you are too young," was his father's only answer. At dusk a storm was approaching, and the father sent the boy out to put the sheep into the fold. "Did you get them all in safely?" the father asked when he returned. "I put all the old sheep in." "You don't mean that you left the lambs out, do you?" "Why, of course, father; I thought they were too young." "You are right," then answered the father. "You can only be safe from the storms of temptation by being in the fold of the Good Shepherd, and you cannot enter too young." This is good reasoning, even though it may not have originated in a boy's mind.

SENTENCE SERMONS

He that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he that is greatest outside. *Joseph Parker.*

The last and worst thing that can be said of a nation, is that it has made its children sad and weary. *Ruskin.*

In the Kingdom of Christ there will be an aristocracy, but it will be the nobility of service. There will be superiority, but it will be the priority of humility. *Charles Edward Locke.*

It has often been said, very truly, that religion is the thing that makes the ordinary man feel extraordinary; it is an equally important truth that religion is the thing that makes the extraordinary man feel ordinary. *G. K. Chesterton.*

God means to care for each soul separately, as though there were no other on earth beside. *Luther.*

Let us live for our children; then will the life of our children bring us peace and joy, then shall we begin to grow wise, to be wise. *Froebel.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

In his third Epistle John describes Diotrephes as one "who loveth to have the pre-eminence." Do those words describe you?

"You were once a little child: what have you done with yourself? You have gained something since you were a babe in the cradle; and you have lost something. What have you gained? What have you lost?"

Have you entered the kingdom?

We implore thy blessing, O God, on all the men and women who teach the children and youth of our nation, for into their hands we daily commit the dearest that we have. Grant them an abiding consciousness that they are co-workers with thee, thou great Teacher of humanity, and that thou hast charged them with the holy duty of bringing forth from the budding life of the young the mysterious stores of character and ability which thou hast hidden in them. Teach them to reverence the young lives, clean and plastic, which have newly come from thee, and to realize that generations yet unborn shall rue their sloth or rise to higher levels through their wisdom and faithfulness. Gird them for their task with a double measure of thy patience and tranquility, and a great fatherly and motherly love for the young, and with special tenderness for the backward and afflicted. *Professor Walter Rauschenbusch,* in *The American Magazine.*

THE LESSON BRIEFLY TOLD

On the return journey to Capernaum from the region of Tyre and Sidon Jesus was thinking of his crucifixion, but his disciples were thinking of his coronation and their own share in the coming earthly kingdom. Ambition and jealousy were rife among them. "Which of us shall be greatest?" they asked Jesus, and in answer Jesus placed a little child among them and said, "You want to be high in my kingdom? You must turn about in your way of thinking and become as low, as humble, and as teachable as this little child, if you are even to enter it at all. In my kingdom the humblest is the highest. In receiving one such little child in my name you receive me." The beauty of the child spirit suggested to Jesus the wickedness of one who would mar it. "Rather than be the cause of the ruin of one of these true believers it were better for one to have a large millstone hung about his neck and then be drowned in the sea." And Jesus continued to speak words of warning to those who put temptation in the way of another. Temptations, things that make people stumble, necessarily exist in this world, but alas for those who purposely tempt others! The hand and the eye are good in themselves, but should they become instruments of evil, should what one's eye sees or what one's hand does cause sin, then destroy, as it were, the hand or the eye, *i. e.* put away that sight or that deed utterly. Then Jesus showed how great was God's love and care for children and the little ones in the kingdom by saying that their angels were always in God's presence, ready to go to their aid at his will, and by giving his beautiful parable of the shepherd who would leave the ninety and nine sheep who were safe to seek and to rejoice over the finding of the one that had gone astray. As unwilling as that shepherd to lose his one stray sheep was the heavenly Father to let one of these little ones perish.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Dangers that surround childhood to-day.
2. The progress of child legislation.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. How much would ten thousand talents be in our money? (See margin of the R. V.) 2. What is the value in our money of a hundred shillings? (See margin of R. V.) 3. What does "worshipped" mean in v. 26? (Clipping, p. 446.) 4. What was the law of Moses in regard to the selling of a debtor? (Ex. 22.3.) 5. Did Peter himself afterwards need much forgiveness? (Clipping, p. 446.) 6. When on the cross what did Jesus say about forgiveness? 7. What does 1 Jn. 1.9 say about whose sins are forgiven? 8. Read Psalm 51, the Prayer for Forgiveness.

Questions to think about. 1. For what did "seventy times seven" stand? (Clipping, p. 445.) 2. What is the force of the "therefore," v. 23? (Clipping, p. 446.) 3. Which one of the Beatitudes is applicable to this lesson? 4. Where are the Beatitudes given in the Bible? 5. What clause of the Lord's Prayer applies to this lesson? 6. Where in the Bible is the Lord's Prayer given? 7. Recall what Hosea said about Israel's penitence and pardon in a lesson of last year. (Hosea 14.) 8. Who wrote the words of our Golden Text? 9. Had Paul always been tender-hearted? (Clipping, p. 448.)

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON XI—DECEMBER 15

FORGIVENESS

Golden Text

Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Eph. 4.32

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Matt. 18.21-35. Forgiveness. **T.** Matt. 18:15-20. Duty toward Offenders. **W.** Gen. 45.1-15. A Forgiving Brother. **T.** Ps. 103.8-18. Gratitude for Forgiveness. **F.** Ps. 32. Peace of Forgiveness. **S.** Eph. 4.25-32. Right Social Relations. **S.** Ps. 51. Prayer for Forgiveness. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Mt. 18.15-35 COMMIT vv 21, 22

21 Then came Peter and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin
against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I
say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven. 23 There-
fore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a
reckoning with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was
brought unto him, that owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as
he had not *wherewith* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife,
and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant
therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me,
and I will pay thee all. 27 And the lord of that servant, being moved with
compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But that servant went
out, and found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred shillings:
and he laid hold on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay what thou
owest. 29 So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him saying, Have
patience with me, and I will pay thee. 30 And he would not: but went and
cast him into prison till he should pay that which was due. 31 So when his
fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and
told unto their lord all that was done. 32 Then his lord called him unto him
and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because
thou besoughtest me: 33 shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-
servant, even as I had mercy on thee? 34 And his lord was wroth, and de-
livered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. 35 So shall
also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother
from your hearts.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21-22. *How oft shall...I forgive him?* See verse 15, which gave rise to Peter's question.—*Until seven times?* See Lk. 17.4. As Chrysostom says, "Peter supposed he was saying something great," for the Talmud said: When a man sins against another, they forgive him once, they forgive him a second time, they forgive him a third time, but the fourth time they do not forgive him.—*Until seventy times seven.* Or, *seventy times and seven,* RVm. This in either case stands for an indefinite number, meaning that there should be no limit to the number of times one forgives his brother. "Seven was with the Jews the number of perfection. When time has run through seven days, it begins again; the circle is complete. So no expression could more forcibly convey the impression of endless, ever-renewed, eternal iteration than "seventy times seven" (*Dods.*)

23-25. *Therefore.* See page 446.—*A certain King.* In the interpretation of the parable, *God.*—*Who would make a reckoning with his servants.* Herodotus and

Zenophon called great officers of state "slaves" (bondservants, RVm), as the Greek word δούλων literally means. The parable pictures a great oriental monarch whose high officials—viceroys or satraps—would have to render to him an account of the immense revenues that passed through their hands.—*Ten thousand talents.* This talent was probably about £200, or $1,000, RVm.—*Forasmuch.* Since.—*Commanded him to be sold.* According to the law of Moses, a man could be sold for a debt or a theft, Ex. 22.3; Lev. 25.39; 2 Kings 4.1.

26-30. *Worshipped him.* Prostrated himself before him.—*A hundred shillings.* The word for *shilling* in the Greek denotes a coin worth about eight pence half-penny, or nearly seventeen cents, RVm. "These offences are to those (verse 24), as a drop of water to the boundless ocean" (*Chrysostom*).—*Took him by the throat.* See "Light from Oriental Life."—*Fell down.* Before him in homage.—*Besought.* The Greek imperfect tense denotes continued beseeching.

31-35. *His fellow-servants.* Other officials of the king.—*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,* Mt. 6.12.—*Wroth.* Angry.—*Tormentors.* See "Light from Oriental Life." This part of the parable does not teach that God is moved by the spirit of revenge, but that the man had sinned away his own pardon.—With verse 35 compare Mt. 16.14, 15.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *Then came Peter and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?* "I say not unto thee until seven times," was our Lord's reply, "but until seventy times seven." And Peter needed the seventy times seven, for he sinned and sinned and sinned again. For he fell and fell and fell again. Peter himself is an illustration of grace that never wearies of forgiving. Yes, Peter is a monument of the patient and pardoning love of Christ. I have fancied that many a time and oft Peter used to say to his soul, anticipating the words of our own Gospel poet: "O to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be." And again and again I am persuaded he used to take himself as a text and preach a sermon of comfort and hope to downcast and despairing souls. And when he came to die it was a saying of his beloved brother Paul that he wished to have graven on his tombstone, and that was this: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

23. *Therefore.* Simon Peter had been willing to concede seven forgivenesses, but strangely enough this king, whose story is introduced with a "therefore," as if it were the direct outgrowth of the seventy-times-seven principle, refuses to forgive his offending servant even twice.

Our Lord's purpose was to show Simon Peter that he was entirely off the right line of thought in his effort to formulate the true law of forgiveness. The disciple had it firmly rooted in his mind that the whole thing was a matter of quantity, whereas in point of fact, as Christ took pains to show him, it is a matter of quality. *William R. Huntington,* in a *Sermon on The Seventy Times Seven.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *How oft shall I forgive him?* The question was a very natural one to the Jewish mind accustomed to regard the Law as a digest of injunctions and prohibitions. The Jews complain of the indefiniteness of the Gospel, and say that, while it has some high and beautiful truths in the Sermon on the Mount, and some pretty stories called parables, yet everything is practically left to one's own choice. It does not put a yoke on the neck and tell you what you have to do, and what penalty is attached to failure and disobedience. In those respects it is claimed that the law of Moses is far superior to the gospel, because in the former you always know where you are. Our Lord must have often encountered this bias in the minds of his disciples and the outer circle of his hearers. While he sought to make them feel the wind that went with the wheels of the Kingdom, they preferred to stand and count the spokes. *Dr. George M. Mackie,* in *Sunday School Times.*

26. *The servant fell down and worshipped him.* He wished to conciliate

him, hence showed him supreme homage. Different degrees of respect were shown in different ways. "Simply to bow the head, was an expression of mere common civility; to curve the body low down, signified a considerable degree of reverence; to throw it entirely down, with face to the ground, was an act of the greatest homage."

The Burman of to-day shows his humble respect by "worshipping" another, especially when he is about to make an appeal for a favor. A Burman lad who had become a Christian visited the old priest whom he had known as a child. He went through the customary prostrations respectfully, and then said to the priest: "I do not *shikko* you as God, but because I do not know of any other way in which to show my respect."

28. *Took him by the throat.* The Roman law allowed a creditor to seize his debtor and drag him before the judge, and Roman writers repeatedly speak of a man's twisting the neck of his debtor till the blood flowed from mouth and nostrils. *Dr. John A. Broadus.*

34. *Delivered him to the tormentors.* In early times there were certain legal tortures—a chain weighing fifteen pounds; a pittance of food barely sufficient to sustain life—which the Roman creditor might apply to the debtor in order to bring him to terms. In the East, too, where no depth of apparent poverty excludes the suspicion that there may be somewhere a hidden store, where it is almost a point of honor not to pay but on hardest compulsion, the torture would be often used to wring something from the sufferings of the debtor himself, or from the compassion of his friends. In all those cases the jailer would be naturally the "tormentor" as well.—*William R. Trench.*

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus' words of our last lesson are followed in Matthew by counsel in regard to an offender, in which he advised his disciples first to tell the offender of his fault, then to rebuke him in the presence of two or three others, and then, if he still gave no heed to their words, to tell his offence to the church. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," he added, "there am I in the midst of them." This counsel about a brother's trespass led Peter to ask his question about forgiveness.

The place is Capernaum. Assign paragraphs 143-145, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

This lesson is one which "teaches itself." Tell the stories about the Forgiveness Account, page 450, and about Sidney, page 451.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. It was a rainy day and two little children were playing indoors. "Let's play church," said Theodore, and Florence assented. "Now," I'll be the minister," Theodore explained, "and tell you what you must do, and you'll be the people and you must listen and do what I tell you." He climbed into a chair and began: "Florence, you must be a very good girl and do whatever your brother wants you to. If he wants your playthings, you must let him have them, and if you want any of his, you must let 'em alone. If he strikes you, you must forgive him. If you strike him he will tell mother and she will punish you."

Isn't this about the way some older boys and girls seem to feel? What does the Golden Rule say? Can that rule be carried out in regard to the subject of our lesson?

For Older Pupils. There is a book in the possession of a nobleman of Sweden in which three great statesmen have written their views about forgiving others. Guizot, at the age of eighty, wrote: "During my long life I have learned two wise lessons; one is, to forgive much; the other is, to forget nothing." Did he know the true meaning of forgiveness? Beneath his lines another noted Frenchman, Thiers, wrote: "I have found that a little forgetfulness does not injure the sincerity of the forgiveness." And then Bismarck, the

German statesman, added the reason for true forgiveness which Jesus taught in his words to Peter about this subject: "During my life I have learned to forget much and also my own need of forgiveness."

What led Peter to bring up the subject of forgiveness?

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Be ye Kind One to Another, Tenderhearted

The Lesson of the Parable. By his parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Jesus taught Peter that there is no rule by which forgiveness can be meted out. The king showed mercy, not strict justice, when his servant could not pay him what he owed, but he refused to forgive him a second time when that servant proved himself unworthy of forgiveness, when mercy would have been a sin.

One who had not wherewith to pay. A friend of mine died suddenly and left his family nothing but debts. While his body still lay in his home, the largest creditor came with the sheriff and demanded to know how much money his widow possessed. "Fifteen dollars are all that I have in the world," she answered. "I'll take them," said the creditor, but the sheriff exclaimed, "No, you don't!" The sheriff was tenderhearted.

Paul's Words of Our Golden Text. The first thing to impress me as I read these words is the change which had been wrought in the apostle. There had been a day not so far away, when you would scarce have expected such a word from Paul. When Paul first appears upon the scene, he seems the incarnation of hard-heartedness. He is a Pharisee, cruel and intolerant, delighting in sacrifice and not in mercy. He holds the clothes of the murderers of Stephen, intensely interested in this ghastly spectacle, and he makes havoc of the Church of Christ. Is it not remarkable that such a man should become the advocate of tenderness? No softening of the years could have wrought that. It is a tribute to the power of Christ. For if it was Christ in Paul that made him great, and inspired him to be the evangelist of nations, it was also Christ who made him tender-hearted. There are men who are constitutionally tender, but I do not think that Paul was of that kind. He had to fight his way out of the stony ground into the green pastures of this grace.

I wish you to see clearly that tenderheartedness is different from weakness. There is a tenderness—and it is very common—which is the antithesis of strength. There is no justice in it, no morality, no love of the good, no hatred of the bad. It is the overflowing of an easy nature that often works irreparable wrong, just because it has not strength enough to take a firm stand for what is right. Not such is the tenderheartedness of Paul. It knows that it may be cruel to be kind, and that sometimes it may be kindest to seem cruel. But it also knows how lonely people are; how sad the heart may be for all the laughter, how heavily the burden of the cross may weigh, although the face is always brave and bright. Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted. You can never tell what that other soul is bearing. And it is this—this instinct for the deeps, this surmise of what is hidden in the shadow—it is this that gives to tenderheartedness its power and its place in Christian brotherhood.

I know no virtue that is oftener disguised than this one. It is not always those of gentle manners who really possess the gentlest hearts. Some of the tenderest men I ever knew have had a rough, boisterous exterior. They were like Mr. Boythorn in Bleak House, who was always for hanging somebody or other, and all the time was feeding the canary that nestled without a tremor in his hand. I am not sure that had you seen our Lord, you would have fathomed his tenderness at once. Had you seen him when face to face with Pharisees, I may say without a doubt that you would not. It was one of those secrets that were revealed to children, for children have far quicker eyes than we, and they detect, as by a kind of genius, the gentleness that is hidden in the heart. The French have a proverb which says this—There is nothing so tender as the austere man. Like other proverbs, that has its exceptions, for there are austere men who are not tender. But at least let it teach us not to be rash in judgment; not to sum up at once against our brother. There are men who seem to have a face of brass, and all the time they have a heart of gold.

But the great secret of the tender heart lies in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

It is the continual wonder about Jesus, that he was so strong and yet so tenderhearted. No authority could make him quail; no array of power could ever daunt him; and yet a bruised reed he would not break, and smoking flax he would not quench. He was not tender because he knew so little. He was tender because he knew so much. All that was hidden from duller eyes he saw—all that men had to bear and battle through. Their helplessness, their crying in the night, their inarticulate appeal to heaven—all this was ever audible to Jesus, and he kept his heart as tender as a child's. And he never lost this tenderheartedness, even in the darkness of the cross. Men scorned him, and they spat on him, and crucified him, yet "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." And what I say is that when that mind of Christ is given by the Spirit to you and me, then whatever happens, however we are treated, we shall be kind one to another, tenderhearted. Condensed from *The Return of the Angels,* by *G. H. Morrison.*

The Tenderheartedness of God.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
Are more felt than up in heaven;
There is no place where earth's failings
Have such kindly judgment given;
For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind,
And the Heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind. *Faber.*

A New Jean Valjean. "When I have given to each man the share that belongs to him, what remains then? It still remains to hand over the share that does not belong to him." The working out of this law formulated by Victor Hugo is wonderfully shown in his great story of Jean Valjean.

The *Youth's Companion* declares that they do some things better now than they did in the days of Jean Valjean, and proves it by this true story which I have been obliged to re-write in order to condense.

Three young couples having a merry luncheon at a fashionable restaurant were closely watched by a man seated far from them. As they arose to go the man approached and said to one of them, "I have a little business with you." "Good evening, Mr. Hayward," the man replied quickly. "Just let me take my wife home, and I will return and meet you here."

The man hesitated, then yielded, blaming himself afterwards for his weakness. But to his surprise the young man soon returned. "Will you go quietly with me?" asked Hayward. "Quietly, by all means. How did you find me?" returned the young man. "Entirely by accident. But tell me about yourself."

And then the young man told him that he had come to that city, a stranger, had secured a position as time-boss over a gang of men working on a sewer, and had risen by his own efforts to the position of junior partner in a large contracting firm, and had married his partner's daughter.

"Why did you run away?" Mr. Hayward questioned. "You had served three of the seven years they gave you for forging the check, and they released you on probation. You were making good. Why did you run away?"

"I know it was wrong, but my position was intolerable. I could not go back among my friends. I had a series of unhappy experiences. I grew desperate. I jumped aboard a train and went as far as I had money to take me. I promised God I would make good. I am a member of a church. I stand well in this city. O my poor wife!"

The poor fellow broke down, and the officer told him that it was his duty to report that he had found him, but he might stay in that city till sent for. The members of the commission met to decide what to do in this case reported to them. Several insisted that he must be brought back to serve the remainder of his sentence. But when one declared that "The law of man should be administered in the spirit of the law of God," the rest agreed with him, and they found a way in which the legal matter could be adjusted. They put him again on parole in the city where he had gone, and gave him a full pardon before the time was quite up.

II Forgiving Each Other

By This shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples. At a communion service in New Zealand a native convert suddenly arose from the table and went away, but returned after a few moments and partook of the emblems. The missionary in charge could not understand his action and asked for an explanation. "When I went to the table I did not know beside whom I should have to kneel," said the man. "Then I suddenly found myself close to the man who slew my father and drank his blood, and whom I swore to kill the first time I should see him. The old revenge seized me and I rushed away from the table. But just then I seemed to hear a voice: 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' That made a deep impression upon me, and at the same time I saw another sight—a cross and a Man nailed thereon—and I heard him say: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Then I went back to the altar."

A Forgiveness Account. John and his sister Gladys were out at the front of the house. Gladys was making a bead necklace for her doll. The beads were on a little work-table beside her. John was playing at trains. "Don't come here, John," said Gladys, as he came near the table. Away John went, and soon forgot his sister's warning. The train came round the corner, and, before he knew, the table was upset, and the beads scattered in all directions.

"O John!" cried Gladys, with angry face, "what did I tell you?" "I'm awfully sorry," said John, as he helped to pick up the beads. John was always sorry, but it did not make him careful.

Gladys did not answer for a moment, but then she said: "Never mind, John. I'll forgive you." She had remembered the lesson she heard on the previous Sunday about Jesus telling Peter how he had to forgive his brother "seventy times seven." Gladys was a passionate child, but had resolved to obey Jesus. She had been saying to herself—although John did not know: "I will forgive him four hundred and ninety times, but after that—" She shut her lips tight. "I'll keep a forgiveness account," she thought, "so as to know when it's seventy times seven."

Before she went to bed she wrote at the top of a clean page in her last year's copy book: "List of the Times I Forgive John." And under this: "Monday—For Spilling my beads." Then she remembered that that very day she had upset a block tower John built to show father when he came home, and John had not been the least cross with her. "I suppose I ought to count that on the other side," she said. She then wrote on the opposite page: "The Times John Forgives Me." "Monday—For knocking down his tower." That made them even. And so day after day it went on. One day she had a longer list, and another day John had it—often they were even. And Gladys was beginning to feel very humble, and said to herself. "I guess if I forgive all I can without keeping any list, it will take me all my life to make four hundred and ninety times. Perhaps after all that is what the Bible text means." *Young Evangelist.*

Forbear, Forgive, Forget.

Forbear, strong heart, forbear;
  Let not the arrow dart
  Which wounds the trusting heart;
Forbear, strong heart, forbear.

Forgive, dear heart, forgive;
  Let not the tide of strife
  Mar thy sweet inner life;
Forgive, dear heart, forgive.

Forget, true heart, forget;
  Let Love heal all thy scars;
  Face upward to the stars;
Forget, true heart, forget. *William Bradford Dick.*

III Even as God also in Christ forgave you

Whence the Spirit of Forgiveness comes. By this parable of the unmerci-

ful servant Jesus shows by a graphic illustration whence the spirit of forgiveness must come. Those who properly realize how vast is the debt they owe to God will not reckon at a high figure the injuries they may have sustained at the hands of their fellowmen, and those who have a proper estimate of the greatness of the forgiveness extended to themselves will not find it too difficult to forgive even their enemies. *Professor James Stalker,* in *The Ethic of Jesus.*

As Dr. F. W. Farrar points out, the parable of the Prodigal Son is the picture of God's full, free, unconditional forgiveness to all who seek him, and call upon him, and repent of their old sins: there is no question of reparation; no demand for the equivalent payment of a debt; no claim for the pound of flesh; no requirement of a substitute; no need for the intrusion of intermediaries; but, as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord pitiful to them that fear him.

The Difference. The Rev. W. K. Greenland declared recently that "The man who goes through life with an unforgiving spirit is every bit as bad as the man who gets drunk," and he enforced his remarks by this conversation. I went into the bank in the city the other day, and saw the manager in his private room. Said he, "Did you pass a man in the outer room?" "Yes," I replied, "who is he?" "I have just dismissed him. He was one of our branch cashiers." "What was the matter?" "His accounts were wrong." "Very serious?" "No, not very, and he is penitent." "Then what do you do with a man who is penitent, as you say he is? Degrade him to the ranks again?" "Oh, no," said the manager; "it's dismissal. This bank never forgives. One mistake, out you go." "You never give a man a second chance?" "Never." "Well," I said, "as you know, I'm a Methodist parson. I'll tell you something: It's a mercy God isn't a bank manager!"

Because of what Christ had done for him. A poor stone-mason in China was robbed by a highwayman and struck in the knee. His knee suppurated and after months of agony it healed, but his leg was then doubled up and so stiff that he could not use it. While he was in a Christian hospital, where his leg was gradually restored, his neighbors looted his fields and robbed his father. Dr. Peill in *The Missionary Chronicle* tells how his desire for revenge was overcome.

He was yearning to get strong to retaliate on the man who crippled him, and now he was still more impatient to get well that he might take it out of his neighbors. But gradually a change came over him, and when he went away healed and strong, and I was telling him to forgive them as Christ had forgiven him, he said to me: "Don't you worry. As soon as ever I understood what Christ had done for me all the bitterness and enmity went out of my heart, and now I don't want to hurt them any more."

He took home gospels and tracts, and came back the other day to tell me how happy he was, all his affairs prospering, and his family and neighbors becoming interested in the truth. He is a great, big, strong fellow who would have been plunged into a life-long feud but for the Saviour, and who now is heaping coals of fire on the heads of his enemies by evangelizing them.

Another Parable of Unmercifulness. This incident is told in *The Expository Times* as a true one. A lad named Sydney, having reached the age of ten, considered he ought to be paid for various little services rendered to his mother in the home. Hearing a conversation concerning certain bills that had to be paid, he conceived the idea of making out a bill for what he had done, and the next morning he quietly laid on his mother's plate the following statement: "Mother owes Sydney: For getting coal six times, 6d. For fetching logs of wood lots of times, 6d. For going an errand twice, 4d. For being a good boy, 2d. Total, one shilling and six-pence." The mother examined the bill, but said nothing. That evening Sydney found it lying on his own plate, with the eighteen-pence as payment; but accompanying it was another bill, which read as follows: "Sydney owes Mother: For his happy home for ten years—nothing. For all his food—nothing. For nursing him through his illness last year—nothing. For his last new suit of clothes—nothing. For being good to him—nothing. Total—nothing." When the lad had looked at this for a moment, his eyes were dim and his lips quivering. Presently he took the eighteen-pence out of his pocket, and, unable to control his emotion, he rushed to his mother, flung his arms round her neck and exclaimed, "Mother, dear! I was a mean wretch to

give you that bill! Please forgive me, and let me do lots of things for you still!"

SENTENCE SERMONS

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Mt. 6.12.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Mt. 5.7.

There is simply no limit to God's forgiveness: He and I are friends, and I must practice his principles. *Peter Ainslie.*

Forgiveness is the heart's forgetfulness of an injury. *William George Jordan.*

Teach us delight in simple things,
And mirth that has no bitter springs;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And love to all men 'neath the sun! *Kipling.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

Our Prayers:

Help me
To be forgiving and from censure free,
And be to others what I'd have them be to me. *J. W. Chapman.*

As we have mastered nature that we might gain wealth, help us now to master the social relations of mankind that we may gain justice and a world of brothers. For what shall it profit our nation if it gain numbers and riches, and lose the sense of the living God and the joy of human brotherhood? *Professor Walter Rauschenbusch.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Forgiveness in the Old Testament and in the New. See Num. 31.1-12; Dt. 7.2; 19.21; Josh. 6.21; Judges 8.16-21; 1 Sam. 15.33; 1 Ch. 20.3.
2. Justice and mercy.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Questions to look up. 1. When had the hatred between Samaritans and Jews begun? (Ez. 4.1-10; Neh. 4.1-16; 6.) 2. Why were the Samaritans especially aroused just now? (Clipping, p. 454.) 3. Where would the Samaritans have had Jesus make his goal? (Gerizim, Jn. 4.20.) 4. What favorable notices in regard to the Samaritans are recorded in the Gospels? (Jn. 4.39; Lk. 10.33; 17.18.) 5. When was a Samaritan woman surprised that Jesus would have any dealings with her? (Luke 4.) 6. What does 1 Cor. 13.7 say about forbearance? 7. Tell the story of Eldad and Medad and compare it with verses 49 and 50. (Num. 11.26-29.) 8. What does Paul say in 2 Cor. 8.9 about the reason why Christ became poor? 9. When did Jesus say "He that is not with me is against me"? (Mt. 12.30.)

Questions to think about. 1. What connection has this lesson with the last? (Clipping, page 455.) 2. How can verse 50 be reconciled with Mt. 12.30? (Clipping, page 457.) 3. What do these words mean: For the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up? 4. Why were the Samaritans unwilling to receive Jesus because he was going to Jerusalem? (Clipping, page 454.) 5. Why did Jesus seek to discourage the man who said he would follow him? 6. What did the man mean who asked first to go and bury his father? (Clipping, page 455.) 7. What did Jesus mean by his answer? (Clipping, page 454.) 8. What did Jesus mean by his answer to the man who would first bid farewell to those at home? 9. How much more do you see in Jesus this Christmas time than you did last?

Note Book Work. Continue your writing.

LESSON XII—DECEMBER 22

FOR AND AGAINST HIM

Golden Text

He that is not against you is for you. Luke 9.50

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Luke 9.49-62. For and Against Him. **T.** Matt. 12.22-30. A Divided Judgment. **W.** Matt. 21.23-32. An Insincere Judgment. **T.** Matt. 6.19-24. The Single Eye. **F.** Rom. 6.15-23. Servants of Righteousness. **S.** Josh. 24.14-25. Choosing Sides. **S.** Deut. 30.15-20. A Solemn Choice. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

LESSON Luke 9.49-62 COMMIT vv 55, 56

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. 50 But Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against you is for you.

51 And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face: 52 and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. 53 And they did not receive him, because his face was *as though he were* going to Jerusalem. 54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this,* they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? 55 But he turned, and rebuked them. 56 And they went to another village.

57 And as they went on the way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. 59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 But he said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God. 61 And another also said, I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house. 62 But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

NOTE:—For the alternate Christmas Lesson, see Lesson III of the First Quarter.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

49-51. *John answered.* See the Historical Background.—*We forbade him.* Compare Num. 11.27-29.—*He followeth not with us.* His work was not done in a manner that met their approval.—*He that is not against you is for you.* Compare Phil. 1.18. "The complementary but not contradictory truth to this, is "He who is not with me is against me. Mt. 12.30. Both are true in different circumstances. Neutrality is sometimes as deadly as opposition (Judg. 5.23); it is sometimes as effectual as aid" (*Farrar*). Compare the case of Eldad and Medad, Num. 11. 26-29.—*Were well-nigh come.* Greek, *were being fulfilled,* RVm.—*He stedfastly set his face.* He was fixed in his determination.

52-53. *To make ready for him.* To secure lodging and meals.—*Because... Jerusalem.* Recall the controversy between Samaritans and Jews as to the place for worship, Jn. 4.20. They cared not to entertain one who was going to worship at Jerusalem.

54-55. *James and John.* Well named by Jesus, "Sons of Thunder," Mk. 3.17. —*And consume them?* Many ancient authorities add *even as Elijah did.* Com-

pare 2 K. 1.10-12, RVm.—*And rebuked them.* Some ancient authorities add *and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* Some, but fewer, add also: *For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them.* Compare Lk. 19.10; Jn. 3.17; 12.47, RVm.

57-58. *A certain man.* A scribe, Mt. 9-19.—*Jesus said unto him.* He doubted the man's sincerity of purpose, and discouraged him by telling him to count the cost of discipleship.—*Nests.* Greek, *lodging-places,* RVm.—*Son of man.* An epithet applied by Jesus to himself, never by the Evangelists.—*Hath not where to lay his head.* For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich, 2 Cor. 8.9. But Jesus is here referring rather to his homelessness than to his poverty: his incessant labors for others did not permit him to tarry in one place long.

59-60. *Suffer me first to go and bury my father.* He asks to indefinitely postpone obedience, for he would remain at home until his aged father dies. See page 455.—*Leave the dead to bury their dead.* The first word "dead" may have been used in its spiritual sense, dead in sin; the second, in its literal sense; the sentence meaning that Christ's claim should take precedence of all other claims, or that those who were spiritually dead could perform this office for his father but he should follow at once. Dr. Allen suggests that it is possible that "Let the dead bury their dead" was a proverbial saying, meaning, "Cut yourself adrift from the past when matters of present interest call for your whole "attention."

62. The light ploughs of the East, easily overturned, require constant attention" (*Farrar*).

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

53. *They did not receive him.* The Samaritans had shown themselves heretofore not ill-disposed (Jn. 4.39) and Luke himself delights to record favorable notices of them (10.33; 17.18). But (1) there was always a recrudescence of hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans at the recurrence of the annual feasts. (2) Their national jealousy would not allow them to receive a Messiah whose goal was not Gerizim, but Jerusalem. (3) They would not sanction the passage of a multitude of Jews through their territory, since the Jews frequently chose the other route on the East of the Jordan.

This national hatred between Jews and Samaritans still continues, and at the present day it is mainly due to the fanaticism of the Jews...The deadly exacerbation between the two nations, which began after the Exile (Ez. 4.1-10; Neh. 4.1-16; 6) had gone on increasing by perpetual collision since the building of the temple on Gerizim by the renegade priest Manasseh and Sanballat, which was destroyed by John Hyrcanus B. C. 129. *F. W. Farrar,* in *Cambridge Bible.*

58. *The Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Suppose that Jesus Christ had been born in a magnificent palace, in an extremely wealthy family; that he had had servants to supply all his wants; that he had travelled in the state of the most worldly emperors; that he had said: The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has palatial residences in many of the most healthful and beautiful places in Palestine. *R. M. Hall.*

You must distinctly understand that it was not his head that was without a pillow so much as his heart. I do not suppose that our Lord, at his worst, had often to sleep in the open air and on the bare ground. But, for all that, he was in reality as lonely and as homeless as his plainest-spoken proverb said he was. Take his proverb home to yourself. You never wanted a table to eat at, or a bed to sleep on. But you know only too well what it is to be very lonely and neglected at a crowded table, and very desolate in a luxuriously furnished apartment. And what he really complained about in Israel, and still complains about among us, is the very few who, with any warmth, entertain his truth in their mind and himself in their heart. *Alexander Whyte,* in *The Walk, Conversation and Character of Jesus Christ.*

60. *Leave the dead to bury their own dead.* Surely these dead buriers are not dead in body; for if this were so, they would not bury dead bodies. Yet doth he call them dead; where but in the soul within? For as we may often see in

a household, itself sound and well, the master of the same house lying dead; so in a sound body do many carry a dead soul within; and these the apostle arouses thus, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." *St. Augustine,* in *Sermon upon the Receiving of Sight by the Blind.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

59. *Suffer me first to go and bury my father.* This reply has called forth various explanations from commentators, but it was evidently merely an oriental way of saying that he could not follow Jesus just now because of his home duties. His father was not really dead; he must, however, stay with him till the end of his life. A German acquaintance of mine frequently remarks, "I must first marry my daughter." The daughter is six years old, and the father means, not that her marriage is imminent, but that he cannot afford this or that expense because he must provide for her future. The father whom the son must "first bury" could not have been lying dead at the time, for in the sultry East persons were buried the day of their death (compare Acts 5.6) and a son would be at home that day attending to the funeral rites, not in the throng listening to Jesus.

In the Westminster New Testament is quoted this illustration from Wendt's "Teaching of Jesus": A missionary in Syria relates that an intelligent and rich Turk, whom he advised at the close of his education to make a tour of Europe, answered, "I must first bury my father." As that father had hitherto been in the enjoyment of good health, the missionary expressed surprise at the intelligence of his death. But the young man explained that he only meant that one must before all things devote himself to the duties which he owes to his relatives.

60. *Leave the dead to bury their own dead.* A traveler in southern China, Mrs. Mary Ninde Gamewell, gives an account of a feast she attended. It was a feast in connection with the funeral obsequies of a son who had died three years before and was now to be buried. This custom of keeping the dead is one of the most pathetic in China. There are various reasons for postponing the interment, but in the majority of cases it is due to the fact that the family is too poor to meet the expense of the burial feast, to which all the relatives and friends of the deceased must be bidden. The ugly wooden coffin is placed in a "rest-house" of mud, or simply set out of doors and covered with a bamboo mat. The rains descend and break down the mud walls of the rest-house, and wash the black paint off the coffin, and the weeds and vines grow up around it. Sometimes it remains thus for years. Occasionally the government performs a work of merit by burying a quantity of the bones of the forgotten and unknown dead at the public expense. These rest-houses and lone coffins meet one everywhere, in the villages where the children play, by the roadside, in the fields, and on the hill-tops.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In Luke's Gospel John's "answer," in which he brings to his Master's knowledge what had been said to the one who was successfully casting out demons in his name, follows immediately the dispute about rank which led Jesus to tell them that they must become as a little child if they would be great in the kingdom of heaven, and to warn them against causing one of the little ones to stumble. At first thought, John's words seem irrelevant, as though John were trying to turn the conversation, but further thought shows that John must have made this confession just then because he feared that, after all, this unknown worker may have been "one of these little ones," and he had done wrong in rebuking him. And Jesus told him his fear was justified, for he said, Forbid him not.

The days have now well-nigh come when Jesus was to be crucified, received up, and his face was stedfastly set toward Jerusalem. The fulness of time has come, the long-foreseen end is no longer to be postponed. This is a fitting place to pause, since pause we must, in our study of Christ's life. The last stage of his life is our theme for 1914. By the rules made for the International Lesson

Committee in the six-year cycle of lessons, Uniform series, three and one-half years must be given to the New Testament and two and one-half to the Old, and the Old and the New Testament lessons must alternate.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, since Jesus would doubtless avoid Nazareth (as Dean Farrar reminds us), must have been over Mount Tabor, past Little Hermon, Nain, Endor and Shunem, to En Gannim (now Jenin), the first Samaritan village on the way. Assign paragraphs 86, 87, 161, 174-175, *In the Master's Country.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS

Take the alternate Christmas Lesson, but instead of the text given from Isaiah Review Lesson III of the First Quarter, showing again the pictures suggested in that lesson treatment. See how much more Christmas means to your pupils now than it did at the beginning of the year. Let one of them repeat these stanzas (Jean Robertson McNary, in Junior Missionary Magazine):

"Christmas means to me," said Pet,
"All the presents I shall get;
All the goodies, books, and toys
That are liked by girls and boys;
Friends and fun and frolic fine,
With pie and turkey when I dine.
Should these things not come my way,
'Twill be no Merry Christmas Day."

Cried Bessie: "Christmas means to me
More than toys and Christmas tree.
All it brings of joy and mirth
Is because of Jesus' birth;
So I try to do and say
Just what he likes on that day—
Giving gifts and merry cheer—
And that's why Christmas crowns the year."

Tell them about the big red stockings distributed by the District Nursing Association in Boston. As the nurses go about from tenement to tenement in the fall they take note of the children who are not likely to have any Christmas of their own, and what they need, and then write the facts upon tags. Here is one of the notes: "Lena Dennik, 110 Tufts St., is a little Dutch girl, six years old. The family have not been long in this country, and the father has been unable to get work. They live in a dark, cheerless court, and are very poor." These tags are fastened to great big red stockings, a yard and a quarter long, and given to children who have hosts of good things. The week before Christmas these fortunate children fill the stockings with boxes of candy, dolls, games, books, sweaters, etc., and then the nurses take them to the unfortunate children. Last year a thousand poor little folks were made very happy when they opened their great big stockings. Can not your pupils give some of their things to other children who are not likely to have a merry Christmas?

"And so, with Tiny Tim we pray
Upon this peaceful Christmas Day
'God bless us—bless us every one
With deeds of kindness done.'"

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils.

Whatever in love's name is truly done
To free the bound and lift the fallen one
Is done to Christ. Whoso in deed and word
Is not against him labors for our Lord.

You all know these lines of Whittier. What incident in Christ's life was in the poet's thought?

For Older Pupils. Begin with the Historical Background.

LESSON TOPICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I He that is not against you is for you

Complementary Sayings. He that is not with me is against me; declared Jesus to the Pharisees, as recorded in Mt. 12.30. In our text for to-day we hear him telling Peter that he that is not against you is for you. Can both be true? In "Listening to God," the Rev. Hugh Black gives this apt illustration in explanation of these two complementary, not contradictory, sayings.

At the time Napoleon meditated an invasion of Great Britain, there were in England a great number of people who sympathized generally with the French Revolution. Imagine that Napoleon actually began the invasion. He would issue a proclamation asking those who were in sympathy with reform through revolt, not that they should actually fight against their own country, but that they should remain neutral. Napoleon might well think that he that was not against him was for him. But the British Government, on the other hand, had the right to expect every citizen to spring to the defense of his country, and to regard him that remained neutral as an ally of the foe, for he that was not for his country was against it.

The man who was casting out demons believed that Christ's name had power, if he did not believe Christ. If all had not opposed Christ, but had given him a fair trial, their neutrality would have been a real serving. There is even still a sense in which our Lord will be for the meantime content with even as little sympathy as neutrality, continues Mr. Black. He asks for impartiality from every human soul. He asks each to consider his claims and even to consider the cost. He desires decision but not blind decision. He will have no recruits by false pretences. So spiritually to give him his chance, not to foreclose the question, not to shut the door in his face, not to let prejudices darken the mind, to be sympathetically open to his influence—that negative attitude is in some stages accepted. But soon we must rank ourselves definitely on one side or the other, and then the other truth comes in that he who is not for Christ is against him.

All True Goodness is moving Godward. Jesus saw that the one who was driving out demons was doing his kind of work, the work he himself would do. The Lord Jesus has many an unrecognized and unconscious disciple in lodges, in labor organizations, in industrial and social brotherhoods, in philanthropic and reform societies. And while he would bring them into a better knowledge of himself, he would not forbid them in any way the work they are doing.

We are in our Father's hands and heart; and he is bearing with us and training us to be his spiritual children. And goodness everywhere is good; and grace is ever at its source. The deeper we penetrate into the highest views of God and his purposes the better, neither can that which is perfect come until we have entered into some apprehension of the goodness of the Gospel; yet we must hold that all true goodness is moving Godward, though men may be at different stages on the road, and may not know the origin or the goal of their movement. Condensed from *The Essence of Religion,* by *Dr. Borden P. Bowne.*

How an Indian who was not against Christ learned to be for him. Wakutemani found himself strangely drawn to the missionary, and he heard her teaching again and again, and departed without reply. But one day he came to her and said: "I will try your way without leaving the old way. I will try both ways at once. Tell me what a Christian ought to do; I will do that. I will also do what an Indian ought to do. And in a year I will follow the way that has satisfied me."

The missionary said: "If you are to be a Christian, you must not drink nor do violence. And you must pray to the Great Spirit to teach you the right way." At his request, she taught him to pray, and he prayed daily. But all the time he lived the savage life.

The dances came, and Wakutemani led them. Naked and painted, he sang the

old war-songs, and leaped and brandished his weapons, the young braves following him. The drums sounded their monotonous accompaniment; the voices droned, and rose at times into yells; and the savage instincts of the Indians swelled with every dance. At last there came a lull, and Wakutemani stood in the midst of the ring. "I said I would try both ways," he said. "This way does not satisfy me. If any others feel as I do, let them follow me."

Two young braves rose and followed him out of the circle into the night. They went back to the Agency and the Mission. "We have tried both ways," they said to the missionary, "and we will follow your way." This was their confession of faith.

They followed in the new way, and found that it satisfied. Every Sunday, in the Standing Rock Agency, a middle-aged Indian stands up in one of the little churches and reads from the Bible, and teaches the people how the Great Spirit wants men to live. It is the Rev. Mr. Wakutemani. Of him the young men know that he was a great brave in his youth, and that he tried both ways, and found the way that satisfies. *Condensed from The Youth's Companion.*

A Soul Test. In a letter Miss Laura M. White of Nanking, China, gives these questions which were written on the board in a girl's boarding-school at the close of the "finals."

1. How much more of the Bible do you know this year than last?
2. How much time have you given to prayer and meditation?
3. Do you control your tongue and temper better than last year?
4. Have you conquered your besetting sin this year as thoroughly as you have mastered mathematics?
5. In which have you done better work this year: acquiring spiritual culture, or moral intellectual knowledge?
6. Give yourself a year's grade for your growth along spiritual lines.

The girls were not asked to hand in their papers, but to honestly write the answers, letting their own better selves be the judge of their grades, and telling the result only to Christ. Why should not you, one and all, give yourselves this same "Soul Test," and if you are not satisfied with your grade, resolve next year to prove yourselves more worthy friends of Christ?

II A Lesson in Tolerance

Because he followeth not with us. We know nothing further about the man, whether he had heard Christ speak and teach much, whether he belonged to the more or less attached circle outside the immediate circle, or whether he afterwards became a follower. We only know that he had sufficient faith in the power of Christ's name to try to work in the strength of it. This man sought to do good in Jesus' name, but did not have the regular hall-mark of service, did not have what we would call regular ecclesiastical sanction. The disciples were favored and set apart, and they thought that as they had so much privilege they should have all power; and were a little offended by the idea that any one else could take upon himself their functions.

A good deal of past and present intolerance has the same earthly root of wounded dignity and personal pique. Men so easily fall into the mistake of the disciples here rebuked by Christ, of making visible communion with them the test of communion with Christ. To speak of the divine right of a form of Church government—Episcopacy or Presbytery or any other—is to merit the Master's rebuke which he gave to his zealous but unenlightened disciples. To confine the free grace of God to any Church channel is to sin against Christian charity. To make holiness dependent on entrance into any community of believers is presumption.

It is the mark of spiritual insight to be able to recognize goodness everywhere, and assert kinship with it, to feel in sympathy with it, to accept it, and thank God for it, to claim fellowship with every good man, to share in every good work, however unauthorized by man, if only it have the stamp of God's approval. Also, it is the highest triumph of grace in us to be willing even to be set aside, to see others do the work our own hands long to do, to be willing to be superseded, to rejoice in every victory of the Cross through others, to stand aside and praise God for every evidence of his power and mercy to the world through other channels than our own, to tear away all pride and prejudice

and receive as brethren all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, to comfort ourselves with the inspiring thought that he has so many instruments beyond our narrow circle, to find peace and joy in believing that he who is not against us is for us. *Professor Hugh Black*, in *Listening to God.*

Other Bible Lessons in Tolerance. See Num. 11.26-29; Jn. 3.26-30; Phi 1.15-18.

I bear them Witness that they have a Zeal for God, but not according to Knowledge, Rom. 10.2. Wilt thou, questioned James and John, that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? Flaming zeal easily becomes intolerant, and the zealot very quickly develops into a persecutor. John and James would have anticipated the fires of Smithfield if they had had their own way in that little Samaritan village. In that cry of theirs breathes the very spirit of the men who in the name of religion burned John Huss in Constance, gibbetted Savonarola in Florence, consigned Hooper and Ridley and Latimer to the flames in England, hung Barrows and Greenwood and Penry at Tyburn, and roasted old women to death in Salem, Massachusetts. And the Lord rebuked these would-be persecutors with a stern and scathing rebuke. They had shown that they were of quite another spirit from him who came not to kill but to keep, not to destroy men's lives but to save them. *J. D. Jones,* in *The Glorious Company of the Apostles.*

III The Besetting Sin

What is your Besetting Sin? Athens had eighty thousand free citizens and four hundred thousand slaves. To prevent the slaves from running away and making good their escape, their owners branded them by burning a circle in the palm of the hand or a mark upon the forehead, by tattooing the owner's name upon the shoulder, or by various other ways. The mark upon the forehead was not visible to the slave, but it could be seen from afar by others. There are those to-day who are slaves to some besetting sin, who are as plainly branded thereby as were those slaves of Athens, but to themselves perhaps, the visible sign is not evident.

It is so easy to make excuses for besetting sins, to say they were inherited and cannot be overcome, to deem them trifling, or even to be utterly unconscious of their persistent besetment, so poorly do we sometimes know our own selves. Dr. Johnson once went to a minister with this request: "Will you tell me what are the defects of my life, so that I may mend them and ask forgiveness for them?" And when the minister replied, "Well, I think you are rather hasty in your temper, very dogmatic," Dr. Johnson exclaimed angrily: "What! you are a fool! If there is one thing I am free from, it is a dogmatic, hasty temper. Get out of my sight, sir!"

Possibly the sons of Thunder did not realize at the time of their outburst against the Samaritans that they were hasty and intolerant. What is your besetting sin?

Our Weakness may become our Strength. In front of the Cathedral of Amiens there is a statue of Jesus Christ in the center and of the six Apostles on either side. Upon Peter's statue Courage is written, as his great virtue, and below it is sculptured the figure of Peter flying from a leopard and then below that another figure of Peter sitting upon a leopard, having conquered him. In each case there is written the apostle's conspicuous virtue, and then symbolically is portrayed the sin or failing which is the opposite of that virtue, and then his conquest over it. Each gained the victory over his besetting sin, and it became his conspicuous virtue. His weakness became his strength.

Our study this year has shown us many of the failings of the disciples, their slowness of understanding, their desire for the pre-eminence, their intolerant spirit that would send away the Syrophœnician woman because she troubled them, and would call down fire upon the Samaritans because they would not receive their Master. Later we learn that the Boanerges brothers, "the Sons of Thunder," gained a very different spirit. It is John who writes, Let us love one another...not in word, but in deed and truth. It is Peter, the turbulent, who writes, "Be pitiful, be courteous;" "Grow in grace."

"I hold it true, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

The disciples' selves became dead in truth, and they rose to the measure of their high calling. Their besetting sins were mastered, and where they had been weak there they became strong.

Conquering Besetting Sins. To brood over our besetting sin becomes dangerous, declares Dr. W. L. Watkinson; it is wiser to attempt a flank movement. The smith seeking to render smooth a plate of iron that has been accidentally distorted, does not smite directly the protuberances themselves, lest in so doing he should break or wound the plate he designs to flatten. Knowing the fibre of the metal, he strikes quite away from the obnoxious bulgings, so removing the inequalities without marring the sheet.

It is true, as Ruskin says, that it is less easy to uproot faults than to choke them by gaining virtues. Peter did not become courageous by brooding over his cowardice, yet he faced the fact that he was a coward on that terrible last night in his Master's life; he did not give up because of his failure, and he did not seek to conquer his besetting sin in his own strength. He gained his courage as John gained his tolerance, by being so absorbed in carrying out his Lord's commission, so occupied in re-living his life with Christ and re-thinking the words spoken by Christ, that it was Christ himself who gained the fight in him and through him. The writer of Hebrews gives the true counsel: Let us lay aside the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness. Ps. 65.11.

Let us lay aside...the sin which doth so easily beset us. Heb. 12.1.

Tolerance has been defined as "a virtue required of the other man": it really does take many of us a long time to learn that it is any duty of our own. *Dr. J. R. Miller.*

Some there are who virtually say, "Let me first do all I want to do, and then when nothing else calls me I will follow Christ": always there is something else that must first be done, and the time for following Christ is still future when the one thing now to be done is to die. *Dr. Marcus Dods.*

THE LESSON'S MEANINGS FOR US

There is no word or hint in all the Gospel records that Jesus ever complained of the hardships of his life. "They were probably as hard as yours or mine."

Each one has a special weakness, his own besetting sin, and well for him if he learns early in life what it is and early gains the victory over it.

Perhaps at the beginning of this year you might have counted yourself for Christ because you were not against him, but after a year spent in his school, in hearing his great words and seeing his great life, you must count yourself against him if you are not for him. Have you responded to his call, Follow me?

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The significance of Christ to the world.
2. Conditions of discipleship.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Ask your pupils to bring to class next week whatever written work you select (see page 466), and also their completed Note Books. Do not fail to commend earnest or painstaking work, or any excellence whatever in these Note Books.

REVIEW

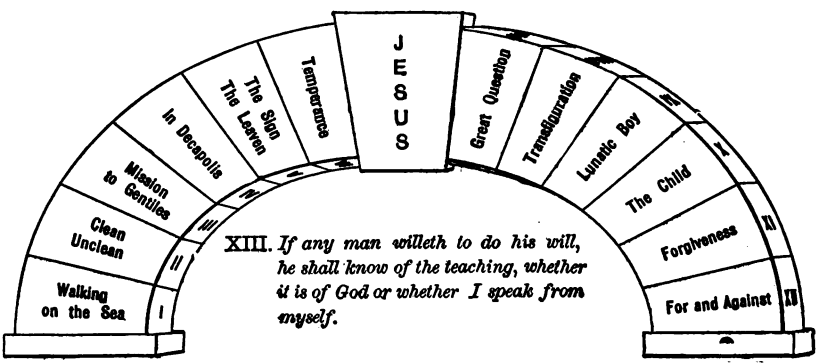
Golden Text

If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. John 7.17

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS—**M.** Mark 6.45-56. Jesus Walking on the Sea. Mark 7.1-23. Clean and Unclean. **T.** Mark 7.24-30; Matt. 8.5-13. Mission to the Gentiles. Mark 7.31-8.10. Wanderings in Decapolis. **W.** Mark 8.11-26. The Sign and the Leaven. Hosea 7. Wickedness of the Wicked. **T.** Mark 8.27-9.1. The Great Question. Mark 9.2-13. The Transfiguration. **F.** Mark 9.14-29. The Lunatic Boy. Matt. 18.1-14. The Child in the Midst. **S.** Matt. 18.15-35. Forgiveness. **S.** Luke 9.49-62. For and Against Him. Or, Isa. 9.1-7. The Prince of Peace. *Int. S. S. Lesson Com.*

A REVIEW FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

1. See directions on page 136.



I. Jesus **W**alks upon
Works with the **S**ea
Sick

II. **D**efying
Disobeying the **T**radition
Ten Commandments of the **E**lders
Eternal

III. The Gentile **M**other's
Master's **R**eady
Real **W**it
Worth and **Great Faith**

IV. The **D**eliverance of the
Deaf mute The **F**eeding of the
Four thousand

V. Pharisees
Disciples seeking **S**igns
Blind man **S**ense
Sight

VI. The **W**ickedness of the icked

VII. Jesus is the must be will be **C**hrist rucified opied

VIII. The disciples **S**ee the gloriously eek solution of **T**ransfigured Saviour roublesome Questions

IX. **S**uffering on **F**rightened ather **D**efeated isciples **C**onquering hrist

X. **H**umbling arming unting for the **L**ofty ittle ost **S**eekers ouls heep

XI. **U**nlimited nforgiving **P**ardon artner

XII. **D**isciples omiciles iscipleship **I**ntolerant nhospitable mperious

A REVIEW FOR LITTLE FOLKS

See directions on page 137.

A REVIEW FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

See directions on page 137.

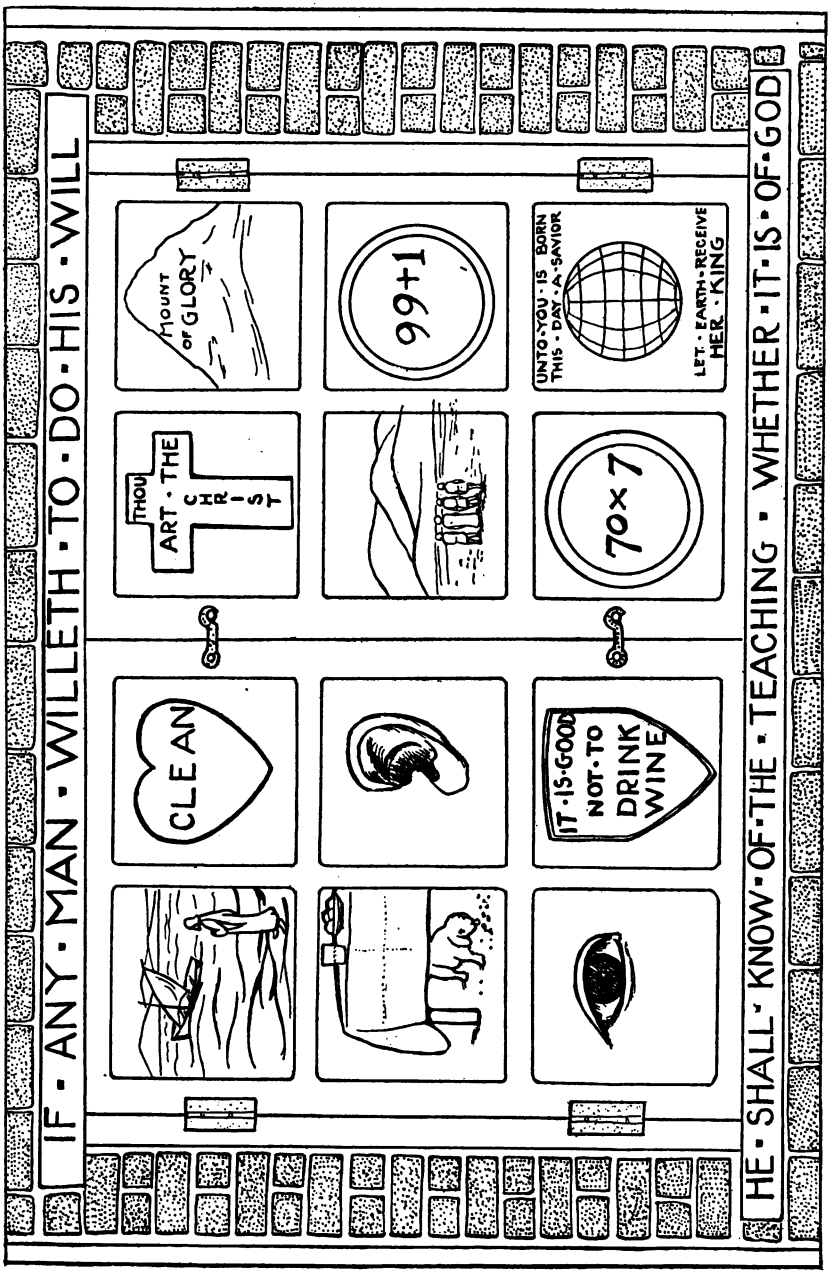
I. After the feeding of the ... ... Jesus sent the ... in the boat to ... and after dismissing the ... went into the ... to.... About the fourth watch of the night Jesus, knowing that the ... was contrary and the disciples were in ..., went to them. When they saw him ... on the ..., they were ..., thinking him to be a ... "Be of ... cheer, it is ..., be not ...," were the words they heard, and as Jesus entered the boat the ... ceased.

II. Scribes and ... came from ... and objected because the disciples did not keep the ... of the elders but ate their ... with hands ceremonially ... "Well did Isaiah ... of you hypocrites," said Jesus unto them, "when he said, 'This people ... me with their ..., but their ... is far from me.' You hold fast, it is true, the ... of ..., but you fail to keep the ... of ... For Moses said, ... thy father and thy mother, but ye say, that by calling your money ... you can be freed from the duty of using it for the support of ... or ..."

III. In the region of ... and ... a woman came to Jesus ... him to ... her ... "It is not meet to ... the children's ... and cast it to the ...," said Jesus. "Yea, Lord," she replied, "even the ... under the ... eat of the children's ..." Because of this saying, which proved her ... Jesus bade her ... away content, for her ... had been cured. And she ... it true.

There came to Jesus at ... a ... beseeching him to cure his ... who was sick of the ... When Jesus offered to go home with him, the ... said that he was not ... to have Jesus under his ... but he knew that Jesus could ... with only a ... Declaring that he had not found so great ... in Israel, Jesus told him that his ... was healed.

IV. When Jesus was in the border of the Decapolis a man was brought to him who was ..., and could not ... plainly. Looking up to ... Jesus said, "Ephphatha," that is, ... And the man ... and ... The amazed people said, "He doeth ... things ...."


IF · ANY · MAN · WILLETH · TO · DO · HIS · WILL
CLEAN
THOU ART · THE CHRIST
MOUNT OF GLORY
IT · IS · GOOD NOT · TO DRINK WINE
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70×7
UNTO · YOU · IS BORN THIS · DAY · A · SAVIOR
LET · EARTH · RECEIVE HER · KING
HE · SHALL · KNOW · OF · THE · TEACHING · WHETHER · IT · IS · OF · GOD

In those days again a great ... surrounded Jesus, ... thousand in all, and he fed them with ... loaves and ... ...

V. Jesus refused to give a ... as the ... demanded, and when he bade his disciples ... of the ... of the Pharisees, they did not ... him. "Having ... hear ye not? and do ye not ...?" Jesus exclaimed. Then he reminded them of his miracle of ... the ... ... and again asked, "Do ye not yet ...?" On reaching Bethsaida he restored ... to a ... man.

VI. The words of the prophet ... to the people of Ephraim: You do not consider that the Lord remembers all your ..., that you have made yourselves ... with the heat of ..., that your passions are hot as an ..., that you are like a ... not ..., that strangers have devoured your ..., and you have not returned unto ... your ...? Woe unto you, for you have ... far from God!

VII. On the way to ... ... Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do ... say that I ...?" "... the ..., ..., or one of the ..." "But who say ... that I am?" ... replied: "Thou art the ...." Then Jesus began to ... them that he must ... many things, be ... and after ... days rise again. Peter ... him and Jesus exclaimed, "Get thee behind me, ..., for thou ... not the things of ... but the things of ...." And to the disciples and the multitude Jesus said: "If any man would come ... me, let him ... himself, and take up his ..., and follow me. For what doth it ... a man, to ... the whole ... and ... his life? For what should a man give in ... for his ...?"

VIII. Jesus took ... and ... and ... and went upon a high ..., and he was ... before them. And the disciples saw two others talking with Jesus, ... and ... "Rabbi, it is ... to be ...," said ...; "shall we not make ... ..., one for ... and one for ... and one for ...?" And there came a ... out of the cloud saying, "This is my ... ..., hear ye him." And suddenly they saw no one save ... only.

IX. When they came down from the ... they saw a great .... And a man ran to Jesus to tell him that he had ... his son, who was tormented by a ..., and the ... had not been able to ... him. "If ... canst do ..., help us," the ... begged. "If ... ...! All things are ... to him that ...," answered Jesus. And then the man cried, "I ..., help thou mine ...." Then Jesus ... his ....

X. "Who is ... in the ... of ...?" asked the .... Placing a little ... before them, Jesus replied, "Unless you become as ... children, you shall not even ... the ... of ... He who ... himself as this little child, he is the ... in the .... Better were it for one to have a ... hung about his ... and be ... in the sea, than to cause one of these little ones to ...," continued Jesus. "For I say unto you, that in ... they ... do always behold the face of my Father. If a man have a ... sheep and one goes ... he will leave the ... and ... and seek till he finds it. Even so it is not the ... of your ... who is in ... that one of these ... ... should ...."

XI. "How ... shall I ... another, until ... times ...?" was a question ... asked Jesus. "Until ... times ...," replied Jesus and then he gave his ... of the ... Servant. When a certain ... made a reckoning with his ... he found that one owed him ... ... talents, which he could not .... The king had ... upon him and ... him the debt. Then that ... went and cast into ... a fellow-servant who owed him a ... . When the king heard what this ... had done, he said to him: "Thou ... servant, I ... thee thy great ... and shouldest thou not also have had ... on thy fellow ...?" And he delivered him to the tormentors. "So shall also your ... Father do unto you," added Jesus, if ye ... not every one his brother from your hearts."

XII. ... came to Jesus and told him that they had seen a man ... out ... in his name and they had ... him because he ... not with them. "Forbid him not," said Jesus: "for he that is not ... you is ... you." They continued their way to ... and passed through a village of .... The ... would not ... Jesus, because he was bound for the ... at Jerusalem, and two of the disciples, ... and ..., indignantly asked, "Lord, ... thou that we bid ... to come down from heaven and ... them?" But Jesus ... them. As they went on their way a man declared that he would ... Jesus anywhere. "The ... have ... and the ...have ...," returned Jesus, "but the ... of ... hath not where to ... his ...." Two other men whom Jesus bade ... him wished to put off obedience to the call and Jesus declared that no man, having put his ... to the ... and looking ... was ... for the ... of ....

A REVIEW BY MEANS OF ALLUSIONS

See directions, page 140.

God gives us the opportunity of learning to trust him in slighter difficulties, that faith may become muscular and strong, and that we may be able to walk to him amid the surge of the ocean. *F. B. Meyer.*

How do I know he's the Christ of God?
I was blind and men trampled on me;
"Have pity!" I cried; and he touched my eyes—
"Be opened," he said; and I see! *Robert J. Burdette.*

According to your faith is the condition on which depends the measure of light or power which each disciple is entitled to expend. *Bishop Thoburn.*

If pressed by poverty severe,
In envious want repine,
Oh, may thy Spirit whisper near,
How poor a lot was thine! *Heber.*

Remember that in this world every mountain top of privilege is girdled by the vales of lowly duty. *Dr. Henry van Dyke.*

"I know how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child."

How are we evidencing the King's forgiveness? In what instances are we who have received mercy showing mercy? What is our attitude toward the sorrows, troubles, distresses of this world? These are our fellow servants, these men and women and little children. *William Huntington.*

What think ye of Christ, friend? When all's done and said,
Like you this Christianity or not? *Browning.*

Fountain of Life, in thee alone is Light!
Shine through our being, cleansing us from sin.
Till we grow lucid with thy presence bright,
The peace of God within. *Lucy Larcom.*

Rabbi Eleazar was excommunicated because he undervalued the washing of hands.

Christ alone can speak the word of power to the morally deaf and dumb and blind.

"And not for signs in heaven above
Or earth beneath they look
Who know with John his smile of love,
With Peter his rebuke."

REVIEW QUESTIONS UPON THE YEAR'S LESSONS

A large number of questions are here given, from which each teacher may select the ten or more which he wishes his pupils to answer in writing. In an oral review the greater part of the questions can be answered.

For Younger Pupils. 1. Where was Jesus born? 2. When was Jesus born? 3. What two groups of men found the Infant Jesus? 4. What happened when Jesus was a few weeks old? 5. What happened when Jesus was twelve years old? 6. What one statement describes the boyhood of Jesus? 7. What was the meaning to Jesus of the descent of the Spirit and the voice from heaven at his baptism? 8. How old was Jesus when he began his public ministry? 9. How many years did his public ministry last? 10. Why was Jesus' ministry mainly in Galilee? 11. Where did Jesus make his headquarters during his public ministry? 12. In what two cities did Jesus spend the greater part of his life? 13. Name the twelve disciples. 14. When did Herod the Great rule and what can you tell about him? 15. What do you know about Herod Antipas? 16. What do you know about John the Baptist? 17. Who were the publicans and why were they hated? 18. What traits of the Pharisees aroused the indignation of Jesus? 19. Name four parables that Jesus gave. 20. Tell one parable and its lesson. 21. Name four miracles wrought by Jesus. 22. Give an account of a miracle that Jesus wrought. 23. Give the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. 24. How did Jesus show his love for sinners? 25. His love for the multitude? 26. What cures did Jesus work for Gentiles? 27. What did Jesus say about

children? 28. About riches? 29. About truthfulness? 30. About hypocrisy? 31. About greatness? 32. About faith? 33. What one rule in regard to the treatment of others did he give? 34. What are the lessons of the transfiguration? 35. What has Jesus said about his approaching death and resurrection? 36. What did his kindred think of Jesus? 37. The multitude? 38. The Pharisees? 39. His former neighbors? 40. The disciples? 41. What do you?

For Older Pupils. 1. What do you know about Herod the Great? 2. About Herod Antipas? 3. When and where was Jesus born? 4. What can you tell about the infancy of Jesus? 5. What is known about the boyhood of Jesus? 6. Why was Jesus baptized? 7. What was the nature of his temptation in the Wilderness? 8. What were other temptations of Jesus during his life? 9. In what two towns did Jesus spend the greater part of his life? 10. What experiences in the life of Jesus does each of these names recall: Bethlehem, Jordan, Nazareth, Galilee, Capernaum, Tyre? 11. Name two miracles that show Jesus' power over disease; two over the elements; two over death. 12. What miracles were wrought for Gentiles? 13. What was the twofold purpose of Jesus in working miracles? 14. How did Jesus show his love for sinners? 15. How did he show his love for the masses? 16. Whom and for what did Jesus commend? 17. Whom did he put to the test? 18. Give instances of Jesus' calling of sinners to repentance. 19. An account of the Sabbath controversy. 20. Who were the twelve disciples and why did he choose these followers? 21. What was his method in their training? 22. Who were the publicans and why were they hated? 23. Who were the scribes? 24. Who were the Pharisees? 25. What great principle of conduct did Jesus give in his answer when John the Baptist tried to dissuade him from being baptized? 26. What great principle of conduct did Jesus give in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath? 27. What one great principle of conduct did he give for one's treatment of others? 28. Give the central teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. 29. Give a number of Jesus' remarkable figures of speech. 30. Give some of the warnings given by Jesus. 31. What is the nature and growth of the Kingdom of God as shown by some of the parables? 32. What are some indications of true discipleship? 33. What did Jesus teach in regard to forgiveness? 34. Prayer? 35. Faith? 36. Truthfulness? 37. Sincerity? 38. Riches? 39. Greatness? 40. Judging? 41. The Judgment? 42. Happiness? 43. Love? 44. Hearing and Doing? 45. The worth of the Kingdom of heaven? 46. How did Jesus offend the Pharisees? 47. The Nazarenes? 48. How did Jesus puzzle John the Baptist? 49. How did Jesus amaze the multitude? 50. How did Jesus impress the disciples? 51. On what two occasions did a voice from heaven make a statement in regard to Jesus, and what was it? 52. What proofs of his humanity have our lessons given? 53. What proofs of his divinity have our lessons given? 54. Who did the disciples declare Jesus to be? 55. What is your opinion of Jesus?

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN WORK TO BE BROUGHT TO CLASS

For Younger Pupils. 1. Write three chapters in the Life of Christ: (1) The Story of his Birth; (2) The Story of his Baptism and Temptation; (3) The Story of his Transfiguration. 2. Draw an outline map of Palestine and locate the chief places mentioned in the year's lessons. Then write an account of each city. 3. Make a list of the Twelve Apostles and tell something about the leading ones. 4. Give an account of the synagogue and its services. 5. Write the Lord's Prayer and tell what each clause means. 6. The Parables. 7. The Miracles. 8. The Sermon on the Mount.

For Older Pupils. 1. Draw an outline map of Palestine and locate the chief places mentioned in the year's lessons. Then write an account of each city. 2. Write in chronological order the main events of Jesus' life until the Transfiguration. 3. The chief characteristics of each of the Synoptic Gospels. 4. An account of the writers of the Synoptic Gospels. 5. An analysis of the Sermon on the Mount. 6. An account of the life of the disciples with their Master. 7. The character of John the Baptist. 8. The conditions of discipleship as given by Jesus. 9. A description of a typical Pharisee. 10. Make four lists of the parables spoken by Jesus: (1) those given in all the Synoptic Gospels; (2) those given only by Matthew; (3) those given only by Mark; (4) those given only by Luke. 11. Make similar lists of the miracles.